

Understanding Sub-state Democracy Promotion

Submitted in fulfilment for the requirement of the degree of Ph.D.

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DECLARATION

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Summary

This project explores how we might understand the practice of democracy promotion as conducted by sub-states. It begins by exposing two problems related to making sense of or understanding, sub-state democracy promotion. Firstly, the international relations (IR) literature, the theoretical field within which democracy promotion is explored and understood, is lacking in its understanding and its accounts of sub-states and their international activities. Paradiplomacy scholarship meanwhile, that examines the international activities of sub-states, does not account for their democracy promotion in relation to the broader IR discussion of the practice. This initial problem leads to the exploration of two research questions; how to better understand sub-state democracy promotion, and; what do paradiplomacy, and democracy promotion studies gain from doing so?

To better understand sub-state democracy promotion, the thesis develops Andre Lecours' (2002) analytical framework; an historical institutionalist examination of 'opportunity structures' that condition paradiplomacy. It is modified, however, to account for and capture data that relates to key factors raised within the democracy promotion literature. The approach is applied to three most different case studies, Flanders (Belgium), Maryland (USA), and Wales (UK), to produce new empirical data from which a better understanding of sub-state democracy promotion can be constructed.

The research finds that sub-state democracy promotion can be understood to take place in three forms – it can be explicit, implicit, or subcontracted. It is explicit when the activities of sub-state governments or legislatures specifically seek to promote democracy abroad. It is implicit when the international activities of sub-states inadvertently promote democracy without specifically seeking to do so, most notably through international development programmes. Finally, other types of democracy promoters subcontract sub-state officials, their knowledge, and expertise. Besides exploring these types of activity, and motivations for them, the thesis also finds that sub-states promote a particular, more inclusive form of democracy and that they initiate democracy promoting activities at key, formative periods in their existence, shortly after the decentralization of power. The thesis argues that this is in part a symbolic activity and a means of constructing the international actorhood of the sub-state at a key, formative period.

This research seeks to make a contribution to both the paradiplomacy, and the democracy promotion literature, not least by providing the first detailed account of, and the first systematic, empirically based understanding of sub-state democracy promotion.

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Abbreviations

BIMR – British Isles and Mediterranean Region
CD&V - Christelijke Volkspartij (Christian People's Party/Christian Democrats)
CPA – Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
CSP – Country Strategy Paper
DAC – Development Assistance Committee
DfID – Department for International Development
DiV – Departement internationaal Vlaanderen (Flemish International Department)
ENoP – European Network of Political Foundations
ESDGC – Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship
EU – European Union
EUCOM – United States European Command
FICA – Flanders International Cooperation Agency
IGR – Intergovernmental relations
ILO – International Labour Organization
ILVP – International Visitors Leadership Program
IMF – International Monetary Fund
IR – International Relations
IRI – International Republican Institute
IRT – International Relations Team
IVLP – International Visitor Leadership Program
KASP – Kosovo Assembly Strengthening Programme
MCI – Maryland China Initiative
MDG – Millennium Development Goals
MoU – Memorandum of Understanding
NAfW – National Assembly for Wales
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCSL – National Conference of State Legislatures
NDI – National Democratic Institute
NED – National Endowment for Democracy
NG – National Guard
NGB – National Guard Bureau
NVA – Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie (New Flemish Alliance)
OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPO – Office of the Presiding Officer
OWP – Open World Program
PMG – Parliamentary Monitoring Group
PO –Presiding Officer
QUANGO – Quasi Autonomous Non-Governmental Organizations
RfP – Requests for Proposal
SDG – Sustainable Development Goal
SoS – Secretary of State
SPP – State Partnership Program
TAG – The Adjutant General
UMD – University of Maryland
UN – United Nations

USAID – United States Agency for International Development
WAG – Welsh Assembly Government
WDA – Welsh Development Agency
WfA – Wales for Africa
WFD – Westminster Foundation for Democracy
WTCl – World Trade Centre Institute

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Introduction

Sub-states, the level of governance immediately below the central state, promote democracy. But the academic literature does not document or explain their activities. Exploring that initial puzzle reveals further weaknesses and problems associated with the understanding of both sub-states and their democracy promotion. In solving this puzzle however, and by developing a means by which sub-state democracy promotion can be understood, the project contributes beyond that core objective. By offering an understanding of sub-state democracy promotion – how, when, and why it is conducted – the project makes an important empirical and analytical contribution to a range of theoretical discussions, the understanding of sub-states, and of democracy promotion.

Democracy promotion is a key foreign policy agenda, justifying billions in expenditure by the world's most powerful countries and institutions. But international relations (IR) theory, the theoretical field within which democracy promotion is explored and understood, is lacking in its understanding of sub-states and their international activities; their existence is hardly acknowledged. The academic literature that does account for sub-states and their international activity meanwhile, derives from various branches of political science; from diplomacy studies, federalism studies, and comparative politics most notably. This treatment of sub-state international activity is itself however, rarely if ever related to the international relations literature. Furthermore, even within those isolated pockets of academic investigation, studies tend to be general in scope, treating paradiplomacy as “all international activities”, a cohesive and coherent concept, understandable as a whole. Very rarely are specific activities focused upon, and none concentrate on democracy promotion. The academic field surrounding the core puzzle is disparate and unhelpful at first glance.

Unhelpful perhaps, but also an opportunity for this thesis to make a constructive contribution to the understanding of the world, its politics and those who engage in it. While the understanding of the fast-developing governance structures at the sub-state level is enriched, the thesis holds important implications also for sub-state, democracy promotion, and IR theory.

This is achieved by addressing the following questions;

- 1) What are the problems associated with understanding sub-state democracy promotion?**
- 2) How might these problems be addressed, and the how, when, and why of sub-state democracy promotion better understood?**
- 3) In what ways will this new understanding contribute to the knowledge of sub-states and democracy promotion?**

In addressing the first question in chapter 1, the deficiencies of IR theory in understanding and explaining sub-states are exposed. While the democracy promotion of sub-states might be incorporated into, and indeed understood through those perspectives if refined, it is argued that currently, such approaches do not do justice to the nuance and complexities of sub-state international activity. Significant adjustment would be required to allow IR perspectives to account for the variables that are thought to be key to an understanding of sub-states. In further pursuit of the first question, paradiplomacy theory is explored in chapter 2, but the understandings and of sub-state international activity do not relate to broader IR theory, particularly democracy promotion theory.

The second question therefore arises from the answer to the first. If existing understandings of sub-state democracy promotion would be inadequate with regard to either the understanding of sub-states and how they engage internationally, or in their understanding of democracy promotion; how can sub-state democracy promotion be better understood? That understanding is defined as how, when and why sub-states promote democracy. The question essentially asks how sub-state democracy promotion can be better understood, in a manner that is contextualised and relevant to both existing scholarly fields?

Essentially, the question asks for an analytical framework, a means by which empirical data can be analysed, and inductively, the how, when and why consequently explained in a manner which is still relevant to the broader understanding of both democracy promotion, and sub-state international activities. This question is explicitly answered in chapter 3. A modified version of Andre Lecours' multi-level framework of opportunity structures – the key institutional variables that are theorised to condition sub-state

international activities – is adopted as a means of bridging the two literatures, and developing an historical institutionalist analysis of sub-state activities that is relevant to the key themes of the IR discussion on democracy promotion, its actors, and methods.

Three empirical case studies will then put the analytical framework to the test, aiming to generate by way of a comparative conclusion, an understanding of sub-state democracy promotion in chapter 7. This understanding of how and why sub-states promote democracy will allow the final question to be answered directly in chapter 8.

The aim of the thesis

This thesis seeks to understand sub-state democracy promotion. Given the paucity of material on the subject, it will involve an inductive approach, constructing an empirical account of the phenomenon and an analysis of how, when and why it comes to pass. In the framework of this thesis, given that both sub-states and democracy promotion are already understood in particular ways by academic scholars, the understanding constructed should relate to these broader discussions. In short, it should “make sense”, or “speak” to both those literatures.

Specifically therefore, “understanding” becomes a shorthand for how, when, and why sub-states promote democracy. It also involves understanding those aspects of sub-state democracy promotion in a manner that can relate back to existing understandings. The latter aspect allows the project to make a contribution to broader scholarship, to enrich the understanding of sub-states and of democracy promotion more generally.

What are sub-states?

In this project, the focus is upon the international activities of specific governance structures located immediately below the central state, sub-states. This level of government, at times referred to as the meso level (see Hooghe, Marks, and Schakel, 2010; Keating, 2013: 104-111; Sharpe, 1992), is state-like, with legislative and fiscal autonomy; competing political factions and parties; powers and competences; budget and staffing resources that can be used in pursuit of policy goals. They are constitutionally a part of the state, interlinked with the central governance structures. They cannot be understood outside that context. But their actorness, what they do and

how they do it, demonstrates that they can also, to some degree or other act autonomously from the central state in both state-like and non-state-like manner.

More specifically, sub-states may be territorially and legally defined by borders and a constitutional settlement. They exist at the level immediately below the central state but may also be above other levels of government and administration. The administration is directed by an executive and thus involves a political context of its own as they ‘...draw in social interests, and provide power bases for politicians and administrative actors’ (Keating, 2013: 105). Sub-states may also be more than simply fragments or localized elements of the state; ‘[t]hey are also territorialized and “localized” representations of a constitutionally “plurinational” state’ (Aguirre, 1999: 204). In this regard, they may possess populations of a distinctive linguistic, cultural or ethnic makeup to that of the rest of the state and hold an historic, geographic, political or economic DNA distinct from its counterparts within the central state; though not necessarily.

Sub-states may be most easily identified within federal states such as the USA (States with their state legislatures and general assemblies) or Germany (Länder and their Landtag). However this would be to ignore their unitary state counterparts, manifested for example in the UK (Nations and their devolved administrations) or Spain (Autonomous Communities and their respective parliaments). Even this differentiation does not reflect the diversity of institutional features however (see Keating, 2013: 105-107), which might even grow as a consequence of devolving power and creating sub-states.

Sub-states are responsible for the public administration of policy fields that are increasingly conditioned by an international context, and for this reason the demands upon them to act internationally in pursuit of their interests will more than likely increase as the globalization of policy agendas intensifies. However, their international activity is complex and varied; again due to their hybrid nature and ability to act through, and independently of the central state, but also due to their structured agency. Attempts to explain why their activity takes the form it does have preoccupied some theorists since the mid-1980s, and are discussed in depth in chapter 2.

Scholars of sub-state international activity use a variety of terms to specify or broaden the type of unit under consideration, further muddying the waters. Non Central Governments (NCGs), constituent units, federated entities and subnational governments are all terms used within the literature to refer to units of government immediately below the central government – the focus of this project. However the terms used amongst authors are sometimes intended to incorporate levels below those again. Not all of what is alluded to by those authors is specifically related to units immediately below the central state. The term sub-state in this project is therefore intended to incorporate the relevant contributions of scholars, as well as remaining specific to a particular kind of actor with regard to the project. Sub-states are the level of governance immediately below the central state.

A puzzle with problems

This project seeks to better understand sub-state democracy promotion. If democracy promotion activities are conceived in a broad way, then the current key actors are states, international organizations, NGOs, political foundations and contractors (Hobson and Kurki, 2012: 3). In a period when the record of global democracy promotion has been less than optimistic (see Carothers, 2006; 2008; 2010; Diamond, 1999; Whitehead, 2010), the literature has given increased attention to new emerging actors in the area of democracy promotion, including rising democracies such as Brazil, India, South Africa, Indonesia and Turkey (Carothers and Youngs, 2011).

To date however, no attention has been paid within the democracy promotion literature to whether the international activity of sub-state governments and legislatures contributes towards democracy promotion, whether as new actors or in any other form. This situation reflects how the increasingly active role of sub-state governments at the international level is an under-developed area of research in the international relations (IR) literature more generally. This project therefore seeks to contribute to rectifying an empirical and analytical deficiency within the democracy promotion, and broader IR literature.

The absence of attention to sub-states within the democracy and IR literatures contrasts with the most recent sub-state diplomacy literature which highlights the extent of sub-

state international activity (Michelmann, 2009; Criekemans, 2010a; Kuznetsov, 2015). Some scholars have theorised that sub-states can be understood as democracy patrons (Kincaid, 2010), and others emphasise that their engagement internationally is not only functional, but may also be characterized as more altruistic or of normative concern (Cornago, 2010a). Yet none seek to understand their democracy promotion.

In one such example, John Kincaid argues that these actors may be 'perhaps better suited than their nation-state governments to promote and strengthen democracy abroad' due to their proximity and in being directly responsible for services to citizens (2010: 27). As is the case with new actors in democracy promotion, it is argued that sub-state governments can make a different and potentially more relevant contribution than the more conventional Western state governments to democracy promotion. Kincaid argues that: 'Trends towards decentralization and federalism in today's world also heighten the relevance of established constituent governments for cultivating democracy in emerging constituent political communities' (2010: 27).

However, such theoretical claims are just that, theoretical, lacking any extensive empirical support. Some empirical accounts of democracy promotion are documented by sub-state scholars (see Berghe, Alstein and Neeb, 2004; Cornago, 2010a; Jeffrey, 2010; Kincaid, 1999; Owen, 2010; Royles, 2010), but these accounts are often passing references, or instances where the activities are not framed within the theoretical and conceptual context of democracy promotion. The themes, concepts, and language of democracy promotion is not used to explain the activities, consequently rendering such accounts incapable of contributing to the broader, IR understanding of the activity. These are further problems associated with the core puzzle, that neither literature relates to each other.

Solving the puzzle

The solution adopted, is to develop and implement Andre Lecours' (2002) multi-level, historical institutionalist framework of 'opportunity structures'. The opportunity structures correspond to the key structuring factors and conditioning variables that have been emphasised by sub-state scholars with regard to sub-state international relations. The historical institutionalist perspective meanwhile, offers a means of

understanding the complex agent-structure relationship associated with sub-state international activities. The framework is a map of the multiple factors and variables that influence paradiplomatic activity. Exploring the opportunity structures' role in each case using an historical institutionalist perspective, is a means of constructing an understanding relevant to the paradiplomacy literature.

The framework is an inductive means of developing an explanation, a precursory step to theorising, hypothesizing and further refinement. Only in concluding the thesis and analysing and comparing findings from empirical cases therefore, can the thesis begin to offer hypotheses regarding sub-state democracy promotion specifically.

The framework is modified to allow the incorporation of further variables as opportunity structures; variables that IR scholars claim are relevant to the understanding of democracy promotion. In this sense, the framework also ensures its relevance to the democracy promotion and IR literature, and offers a better way forward empirically and theoretically. It allows for the construction, in chapter 7, of a better understanding based on data from three, most different empirical case studies; Flanders (Belgium), Maryland (USA), and Wales (UK).

Drawing on the democracy promotion as well as the sub-state literatures, the project identifies key themes for consideration such as the influence of a national interest upon the motivations, the methods of democracy promotion employed, the nature of the democracy promoted, and the role of nationalism. By ensuring that the explorations consider these prominent themes, the Lecourian-institutionalist approach remains relevant to the broader literature and theory on the promotion of democracy.

In in better understanding sub-state democracy promotion and explaining sub-state activities, this project goes further than enriching the understanding of democracy promotion with its empirical, analytical and normative contributions. It also links sub-state activities to broader IR scholarship. The relevance of the former is realised, and the limits of the latter addressed. Valuable insights are gained, not only into the democracy promotion of sub-states, but to democracy promotion as an activity, the role of various hitherto underappreciated actors and factors within that field, and the nature of sub-state international actorness.

Thesis outline

The thesis can be divided into two general sections followed by a discussion. The first section (chapters 1-3) seeks to address the first two questions, exploring the existing scholarship with regard to both democracy promotion and sub-state international activities and developing the analytical framework. The puzzle – how to understand sub-state democracy promotion – and its associated difficulties are explored in detail and a solution proposed. That theoretical solution is then applied in three case studies based on empirical research conducted during 2014-2015 (chapters 4-6). Chapter 7 compares the cases to construct a means of understanding sub-state democracy promotion. Chapter 8 seeks to address the final research question directly by exploring the implications of the understanding for the broader academic scholarship and understanding of sub-states, democracy promotion, and IR more generally.

Chapter 1 explores the academic understanding of democracy promotion. It firstly seeks to identify and define what exactly the practice of promoting democracy entails. Though encompassing a broad range of activities, from regime change to international development projects, the practice is nonetheless facing a “backlash” since the Iraq and Afghanistan wars of the 2000s, and reversal of a general global trend toward further democratization that had begun after the fall of the Soviet Union. An exploration of the actors involved and how they engage, further enriches the understanding of who and what democracy promotion entails, as does an examination of the nature of the democracy being promoted by the actors. This allows for a relevant comparison and contextualization of the findings of the case studies.

The chapter concludes with a discussion of democracy promotion theories. Themselves deriving from broader IR, the various perspectives compete and contrast in their explanations of the practice. They do nonetheless address to a greater or lesser extent, a central question with regard to democracy promotion; why do actors promote democracy? The competing answers offered emphasise and detail a commitment to certain values and ideals, or an instrumental pursuit of interests, or democracy’s role as cover for capitalist interests. While competing and at times innovative, none of these theories incorporate sub-states into their frameworks.

The democracy promotion literature does not offer a means to understand sub-state democracy promotion. The literature does not reveal what sub-states do, how they do it, when, nor why they might wish to promote democracy. But it does constitute the theoretical context for such a understanding. Chapter 1 therefore enriches the understanding and allows for a contextualization of the findings, while also detailing the puzzle at the heart of the project. But the deficiencies of the IR perspectives necessitate a further and broader exploration of the academic literature.

Chapter 2 consequently turns to the literature concerned with the international activities of sub-states. A review of the literature establishes that sub-states have engaged abroad extensively over the past thirty years. Though rarer than economic, cultural, or scientific activities, the most relevant to the project is what is termed “political paradiplomacy”, or activities that seek to affect socio-political change elsewhere. The key factors concerning political paradiplomacy, such as the influence of local nationalist forces, or the capacity of sub-states to engage differently to states in the political field, are also discussed. These discussions further enrich and contextualize the empirical work of the project. A brief section also explores the (very) little scholarship that has looked at sub-states as democracy promoters, noting that the discussion does not relate to the IR literature, and is lacking in any significant empirical support for the few theoretical claims made.

The chapter then moves to outline the development of paradiplomacy theory, noting that an early phase lacked a coherent attempt to build theory. More recent scholarship however has converged on several key variables that structure the capacity of sub-states to engage internationally. Andre Lecours specifically, has “mapped” the variables in his analytical framework.

Chapter 2 enriches the project’s understanding of sub-state international activities, and offers to contextualize the findings of the empirical research of the project. Key factors are also identified for consideration during the empirical research. With regard to the core puzzle however, a solution is adopted in the form of the Lecourian framework; a means by which sub-state democracy promotion can be investigated and understood, consistent with the most recent paradiplomacy scholarship. Ultimately, chapters 1 and

2 act as literature reviews that; firstly details the answer to the first research question, and secondly, contributes to and informs the answer to the second research question, and the means of better understanding sub-state democracy promotion.

Chapter 3 addresses the second research question directly, outlining a means by which sub-state democracy promotion could in theory, be better understood. Specifically, it draws upon the findings of chapters 1 and 2 to modify the Lecourian framework. The multi-level framework is detailed, noting the opportunity structures that will be considered at the regional, national, continental, and global levels. Key themes are also identified so as to refine and focus the exploration of the empirical cases in order to remain as relevant to the democracy promotion and sub-state literature as possible.

The chapter also sets out the justification for the selection of three case studies; Flanders, Wales, and Maryland. A most different system design is adopted in order to explore fully the extent and nature of sub-state democracy promotion. Selection is guided by the key domestic structures purported to be key conditioning factors.

Flanders can be seen as perhaps the most constitutionally “empowered” sub-state in the world, particularly with regard to international activity. The Flemish government has broad, legally defined international affairs powers, a high level of involvement with international networks and an integral role in defining the central state’s foreign policy through formalized intergovernmental processes. Its government enjoys ‘fully legitimate and legal direct access to the international stage’ (Bursens and Massart-Pierard, 2009: 97), and the presence of a strong and often ruling nationalist party characterizes its political scene.

Maryland occupies an almost opposite position to Flanders; a functional international actor at most, sporadic and informal relations with the federal government, and without sub-state nationalist or significant territorial-political forces impacting upon the political context.

Wales meanwhile offers an insight into “other” or “mid-way” possibilities; a constituent part of a Unitary as opposed to a Federal state holding very limited formal capacity and competence international affairs. There is a presence of, but never dominating,

nationalist politics, and fluctuating, semi-formal intergovernmental relations with the UK Government.

Chapters 4 (Flanders), 5 (Maryland), and 6 (Wales), are consequently the case study chapters. A range of democracy promotion activities are examined in detail, followed by an understanding of that sub-state's democracy promotion based on the Lecourian framework and the relationship with the key factors and variables.

Flanders is explored in chapter 4, and specifically the government's Central and Eastern European Programme (CEEP), its bilateral relations, and its development cooperation programme since the key, 1993 reforms that effectively established Flanders in its current constitutional form. The CEEP emerges as a comprehensive socio-economic cooperation programme which explicitly seeks to promote democracy in former Soviet states. Bilateral relations with Chile also involves an explicit attempt to promote democracy in the post-Pinochet country. Development cooperation programmes meanwhile promote democracy more implicitly through good governance schemes adopted and emulated from the global development industry. Interestingly, the key agency of the first post-1993 Christian Democrat government is identified as key in the development of the explicit democracy promotion activities, not, as theorised, the nationalist party.

A lack of agency in the field of political paradiplomacy from the executive forces is a distinguishing feature of the Maryland case, examined in chapter 5. The Governor and the state's executive have not developed any political paradiplomatic activities. Consequently, the sub-state cannot be understood as a democracy promotion actor as such. Nonetheless, Maryland legislature staff, their expertise and knowledge of democratic governance has been frequently sourced, for various reasons, to supplement or supplant national level organizations' democracy promotion work abroad.

The National Guard have been subcontracted by US and NATO military organizations as providers of a "softer" cooperation programme to post-Soviet countries, explicitly aimed at promoting democracy. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) meanwhile, the US' largest, non-partisan organization representing legislatures and their staff, engage internationally to share and promote good governance practices and

techniques, subcontracting Maryland staff in doing so. Similarly, federal and national organizations subcontract legislature staff to again supplement their democracy promotion programmes with foreign partners. Finally, with Sino-US relations providing a difficult context within which US personnel can provide democratic governance support to Chinese officials, Maryland University, subcontracting Maryland legislature staff, offers a more acceptable means of facilitating the knowledge exchange. Briefly, Maryland can be seen as a supplementary or proxy source of specialist democratic governance knowledge to be subcontracted by democracy organizations. In the realm of democracy promotion, Maryland is better understood as an opportunity structure to other actors, than an actor capable of capitalizing on opportunities itself.

Chapter 6, Wales, investigates the executive and legislature's international activities since devolution in 1999. The government is found to be constrained from engaging in political paradiplomacy by the constitution and disciplining intergovernmental relations (IGR). It has however established an international development programme which, though implicitly, promotes democracy through good governance schemes adopted and emulated by Welsh practitioners from the global industry. The legislature meanwhile, following a *de facto* constitutional reform and empowerment of the Office of the Presiding Officer (OPO), has frequently engaged with international networks and partners to explicitly promote a distinctive, "Welsh" democracy. Furthermore, the legislature has become a source of expertise, sourced and subcontracted by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy.

Alone, the findings of the three case study chapters offer a significant empirical contribution to the democracy promotion and the sub-state literatures. A Lecourian-institutionalist explanation of each case further enhances the understanding. However, chapter 7 offers a general Lecourian-institutionalist understanding of sub-state democracy promotion with reference to key themes identified in early chapters. Chapter 8 moves on to address the final research question, and outline the theoretical implications of the project to the sub-state, democracy promotion, and IR scholarship. The findings and argument are discussed in the following section.

Findings on sub-state democracy promotion

First and foremost, it is found that sub-states have been promoters of democracy across the globe. They have been engaging in this activity in a variety of ways; implicitly, explicitly, multilaterally, bilaterally, in line with global practices, innovatively, on behalf of broader democracy organizations, through development programmes, through transnational networks, or through a self-designed engagement with single, or multiple partners. Their absence from the democracy promotion literature does not mirror any absence from the “real” world of promoting democracy. Sub-states promote democracy.

Chapter 7 discusses the findings from the three case studies and offers a means of understanding sub-state democracy promotion, based on the Lecourian-institutionalist framework. It is argued that there are three types of sub-state democracy promotion; explicit, implicit, and subcontracted democracy promotion. Each can be distinguished from the other, due to the opportunity structures and their relationship with political agency.

Explicit democracy promotion is dependent upon key opportunity structures, namely the capacity and competence of the sub-state to engage in political paradiplomacy. This is not the case for Maryland and Wales’ executive, but is the case for the legislature in Wales, and for the Flemish government. Consequently the Flemish government can engage in such explicit democracy promotion activities as the CEEP, and its bilateral relations, while the Welsh legislature can engage in the explicit promotion of “Welsh” democracy. Furthermore, the institutionalist perspective emphasizes the agency of the Flemish government and Welsh Presiding Office who emerge as key forces initiating the explicit activities. They are motivated by the domestic political setting to a project a particular notion of the sub-state abroad at early and formative periods. In this case, sub-states can be considered democracy promotion actors.

Implicit democracy promotion involves an inadvertent contribution to the promotion of democracy through the sub-state’s activities. Specifically, the Welsh and Flemish governments do so through “good governance” projects contained within their international development programmes. The capacity to engage in international development is an important prerequisite, as is the agency and decision of the

government to do so (though the government could be compelled by some constitutional arrangements). Nonetheless, a further factor emerged as integral to the implicit promotion of democracy, namely the influence of international development norms and practices. In taking a lead from, and emulating the practices and norms of the global development industry, sub-states have consequently adopted good governance projects as part of their development programmes. Though for the sub-states, it is but a case of becoming a good international development actor, they have nonetheless become implicit democracy promoters. In this sense also, sub-states can be considered democracy promotion actors.

Finally, where agency is absent from the sub-state's governance structures, but staff, their expertise and knowledge has been sourced by other democracy promotion actors, we may refer to an instance of subcontracted democracy promotion. The federal/central government or national level democracy organizations such as the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, the National Democratic Institute, or the NCSL have, to supplement broader democracy programmes, or as a proxy, subcontracted the staff, expertise, and knowledge of sub-states. As evidenced in the Maryland and Welsh cases, the sub-state itself becomes an opportunity structure for other actors, and a source or means of adjusting the nature of their democracy promotion. The sub-state cannot be considered an actor when its staff and knowledge is subcontracted. The key agency comes from other actors who look to source the particular knowledge.

In all instances of democracy promotion it is observed that the global political-security context played a key conditioning role. Flanders' explicit democracy promotion activities for example, depended on a dampened security context in Central and Eastern Europe, Chile, or South Africa. The global discourse surrounding international development at the time when both Flanders and Wales were setting up their programmes emerged as a significant influence shaping the form and location of the projects. The global political-security context is also a major factor in subcontracted democracy promotion. Sub-state officials and their National Guard emerged as ideal proxies while the Federal government's relationship with other countries remained difficult, or where there was a desire to project a less aggressive posture internationally.

The global political-security context can create opportunities for sub-states as actors, or to be subcontracted by other actors.

Furthermore, the temporal context was a key consideration in all cases, not least in conjunction with the global political-security context. At key periods over the past thirty years, the global context has facilitated and created opportunities for sub-state democracy promotion of various forms. Once established however, those activities invariably continue, and the historical institutionalist concept of path dependency helps explain such continuity. Also deriving from historical institutionalist theory is the notion that there are key junctures within the lifespan of institutions where rules are established or re-established. The key, formative period, shortly after the decentralization of powers to the sub-state is one such period. When the rules of the game are less clear, particularly if rules are often formed and maintained by a combination of constitution and IGR, those rules and consequently the international actorhood of the sub-state can be defined and clarified by the agency of actors.

In establishing the rules at key formative periods, the sub-state not only sets the path for the future, but also defines its international actorhood. The Flemish government and Welsh legislature sought to do so by explicitly promoting democracy, in turn aligning the sub-state to particular values, and defining through activity, its actorhood. International development programmes are also attempts, by both the Flemish and Welsh governments, to define through association and action, the type of international actors they are. This project argues that explicit and implicit democracy promotion are a means by which sub-states can construct the actorhood of their sub-states at key, formative periods.

Several scholars claim that the presence of nationalist forces are a key variable, their agency often responsible for the development of paradiplomacy beyond the economic field (see Kuznetsov, 2015: 110; Lecours and Moreno, 2003: 6; Lachapelle and Paquin, 2005: 82-85; Paquin, 2004). However, the Flemish Christian Democrat and Welsh Labour parties proved to be the key agents in the cases explored in this project. It is argued that nationalism's role in developing paradiplomatic activities is at least more nuanced than is claimed in the scholarship, or at most irrelevant. Rather, the

aforementioned post-juncture and formative period is the key factor when even non-nationalist parties seek to construct the actorness of the sub-state at early, formative periods when doubt and a lack of clarity exists over the sub-state's actorness.

Finally, while the location and method of delivery is often influenced by global political factors or the norms of the industry, sub-states nonetheless often promote a particular model or aspects of democracy. It is argued that the sub-state knowledge being transferred is broadly similar and common in all cases. Themes of transparency, scrutiny of legislation and expenditure, accountability, and equality of access to governance structures are consistent areas where sub-state officials are involved in imparting their knowledge and expertise. These findings have implications for the broader understanding of the field.

Chapter 8 discusses the implications of the understanding for the sub-state, democracy promotion, and IR scholarship. The chapter effectively addresses the third research question directly summarising the findings and exploring their implications. The chapter discusses the potential for sub-states to bypass political difficulties faced by states, or act as proxies for national governments and organizations. Their democracy promotion can be seen to complement current theories, providing an "extra-liberal" component to donor packages. Their subcontracted knowledge can also be seen to be a particular knowledge focussed on constructing legitimacy for the broader state. The latter, though tentative claim, suggests that the presence of sub-state democracy within broader democracy promotion packages betrays an attempt by the designers of those packages to construct legitimacy for the new governance structures.

Further implications of the understanding are raised with regard to the explanatory potential of IR theories if sub-states and their international activities cannot be incorporated into their frameworks. The scholarship that seeks to theorise sub-state international activity is also addressed, noting the key role of the constitution, global political context, and regional agency in initiating activities. Further emphasis is placed upon the concept of constructing actorness at key, formative periods as a means of enriching the understanding of sub-state international activities. The role of nationalist parties meanwhile is challenged, based on the empirical findings and theoretical claims

made in the project. Finally, findings such as the role of sub-states as proxies, and practical benefits of subcontracted sub-state democracy promotion for other actors are also discussed before raising some practical implications and considerations for the policy and practitioner community by way of closing.

The thesis will now proceed to chapter 1, and the review of the democracy promotion literature in an attempt to address the first two research questions.

Chapter 1: Democracy Promotion

The aim of this chapter is to review the literature regarding democracy promotion. In doing so, the gaps and difficulties of the literature with regard to explaining sub-state democracy promotion are highlighted. This begins to answer the first of the project's research questions, detailing the current difficulties of attempting to understand sub-state democracy promotion, and emphasizing the contribution the project may consequently make to current scholarship. Concurrently, the key issues, themes, and disputes regarding the activity, the actors, their methods, and the broader implications and role of democracy promotion within international politics will be highlighted. These strands will anchor this project's study of sub-states within the established understanding of the practice, in turn helping to address the second research question addressed fully later on in the thesis.

This chapter will begin with an overview of how democracy promotion is understood by scholars, highlighting the various broad categories, and the need to consider more implicit activities such as international development assistance. Following this, a brief review of the literature concerned with the conceptual underpinning of the practice reveals that the model of democracy in question is invariably a specific, liberal-market orientated one. An exploration of the established actors and their methods follows, before the prevailing crisis of democracy promotion, what has been termed the backlash against the practice, is introduced as an important consideration. These discussions set the context for how democracy promotion is understood. They also point to the important themes that any relevant study of sub-state democracy promotion must relate to.

Finally, before concluding, a section explores the current IR scholarship and the manner in which democracy promotion is framed and explained. The section concludes that IR perspectives omit sub-states, and fail to account for their international activities, necessitating a broader search for an adequate analytical framework that will help answer the second research question.

The main finding of this chapter is that, within the accounts and explanations of the practice of democracy promotion, sub-states are absent. The literature does not reveal

what sub-states do, how they do it, or why they might wish to promote democracy. While an understanding of democracy promotion is key to contextualizing this research project, another literature must be explored in order to develop an analytical framework, and a means of understanding sub-state democracy promotion.

1.1 What is Democracy Promotion?

...it means the processes by which an external actor intervenes to install or assist in the institution of democratic government in a target state (Hobson and Kurki, 2012: 3).

Hobson and Kurki's definition does not detail or disqualify any model of democracy nor any particular method. Consequently, explicit hard power and coercion or voluntary processes of soft or implicit measures may be employed to promote any of the myriad models of democracy and still fall within the scope of the definition. In theory, the term "democracy promotion" may encompass anything which promotes that so flexible and contested of concepts; "democracy".

However, such conceptual stretching risks losing any specific meaning if too much is attributed to the term. As Burnell warns:

All things considered, it follows that if democracy assistance is defined as whatever helps democratization directly or indirectly, sooner or later, then our sense of it could be so generous as to undermine the value of the term (Burnell, 2000: 12).

An immediate problem is faced therefore, when approaching the study of democracy promotion; it is simultaneously a term which describes and refers to a particular practice, and a concept that may be stretched as far as the understanding of democracy itself can be. An appropriate starting point may therefore be the academic literature that first engaged with questions of supporting democracy abroad.

While looking at transitions from authoritarianism to democracy around the world, Lawrence Whitehead (1996) began to suggest that the international dimension was worthy of consideration as a key factor in the process. Huntington's (1991) study of the 'third wave' of democratization meanwhile led him to claim that international factors

were key to a global phase of democratization following the demise of the Soviet Union. Huntington's study 'sparked the view that the world was in the grip of a period of rapid global change, with democratization at its core' (Grugel 2002: 44) as a 'wave' of states worldwide turned to democracy as a means of governing.

Concurrently western governments began to deliberately emphasise and expand their efforts to promote democracy and encourage the process in other countries. The Clinton administration's escalated rhetoric for example, declared that support for advancing the cause of democracy elsewhere was a 'key organising principle' (Carothers, 1999: 5). Since the early 1990s, international governance institutions and transnational NGOs have also become key players in the field of democracy promotion following the incorporation of new development aid practices which emphasized "good governance" (Abrahamsen, 2000: 1-24; Guilhot, 2005). In other words, international actors have sought to develop their potential as "democratizers" within other countries. Since the end of the Cold War;

State and non-state actors alike have vigorously contributed to the emergence of a new international norm that considers democracy promotion to be an accepted and necessary component of international behaviour (Schraeder, 2002: 234).

Though the practice was overwhelmingly dominated by the geopolitics of the cold war until 1990, three key global events seem to occur in this crucial period to create the conditions for what is generally accepted as a boom in activity and a proliferation in methods, actors and targets.

1) The 'withdrawal' of Soviet power and the consequent absence of a globally competing or conflicting model of governance (see Carothers, 1999: 4-5; Huntington, 1991; Schraeder, 2002: 2-6), was consequently far more open and accepting of external actors trying to affect change;

Suddenly, it was no longer the case that when the United States or another Western country crossed borders trying to affect the politics of another country, the first assumption was that this was part of Cold War tactics (Carothers, 2008: 124).

2) The pace of the wave and the global democratic trend provided a sense of inevitability which contributed to the enthusiasm. Fukuyama's (1992) 'end of history' can be seen as an attempt to explain this rather unique moment of global history where liberal democracy stood in unchallenged supremacy as a model of government.

The democracy rhetoric escalated across the decade, leading to sweeping, utopian declarations such as Clinton's prediction in his second inaugural address that, "The world's greatest democracy will lead a whole world of democracies" (Carothers, 1999: 5).

3) The development of the global political economy, also "freed" and enthused by the unrestrictive political context, has coincided with the growing influence and assertiveness of international governance institutions. Institutions such as the IMF, UN and World Bank attempt to tackle a perceived deficiency in development assistance by emphasizing the need to develop good governance globally. The institutions have attempted to impose a form of global order and establish norms in order to facilitate socio-economic development. Furthermore, the linking of democracy with socio-economic development, and the international development agenda specifically, has incorporated more actors and resources into the practice.

1.1.1 Various types

Within the post-cold war context, the practice has taken many forms. Divergence within the practice can be observed in the choice of methods that now span a broad spectrum; from military intervention and "regime change" to technical and legal assistance to civil society groups.

The proliferation in terminology used by actors to differentiate themselves and others can however seem perplexing. Exporting democracy; democracy assistance; underwriting democracy; democracy aid; political aid; governance reform; supporting human rights; legal reform or development aid are but some of the terms used to cover various or specific forms and methods of democracy promotion. They often refer to methodology or reflect an attempt by actors to distance themselves from other methods. In exploring the various types, we may identify the types of activities that sub-states may or may not be able to engage in.

Some within the academic literature have advanced something approaching a limited typology of these variations (Burnell, 2000: 4-14), while others have attempted to place the various forms of intervention on a spectrum going from least to most violent (Schraeder, 2002: 219-220). To see democracy promotion inhabiting a broad spectrum of activities and methods is useful in that it supports the view that there is 'significant overlap' between the methods and 'important sub-classifications will be required in order to distinguish between alternative paths and outcomes' (Whitehead, 1996: 4). Whitehead's qualifying statement emphasizes the complexity and fluid nature of democracy promotion. Furthermore, in recognizing the variation between types, we may use "democracy promotion" as an umbrella term that includes a plethora of forms and methods.

At one end of the spectrum are attempts at *Exporting Democracy* to states where there is very limited or no indigenous movement toward democracy (Schraeder, 2002). The removal of the existing governance structures often involves the employment of "hard" power or military means. *Underwriting Democracy* meanwhile is where democratization is a process well under way with a degree of prominence. External forces attempt to "lock in" a state's path to democracy through conditional assistance – the EU's membership process would be an example of such a method. These would represent a coercive, or what some refer to as a 'control' method (Whitehead, 1996). We may see these activities occupying one end of Schraeder's spectrum involving military force or conditioning membership of transnational organizations upon fundamental constitutional reform as the key mechanisms to achieving the goals. *Exporting* and *Underwriting* entail a strong ideological and political commitment backed up by "hard" power or a formidable status. These seem least relevant to sub-states that lack "hard" power tools or imposing international presence.

'Conditionality' or the 'deliberate use of coercion by attaching specific conditions to the distribution of benefits and rewards to recipient countries' (Schmitter, 1996: 30; Schimmelfennig and Scholtz, 2008), occupies a less aggressive section of the spectrum of activities. Adjusting the volume of aid depending on performance and issuing legal or economic threats also allows the promoter to take punitive action and to establish a *negative linkage* between the aid and the target. The reverse is also possible as

promoters may attach conditions to aid that reward good performance, establishing what have been termed 'positive linkages' (van Cranenburgh, 1999: 96-97). Budget support or more favourable trade conditions may be established in return for further progress along the democratization path for example.

Democracy Assistance meanwhile is noted for the positive nature of its *modus operandi*; supporting, incentivising, inducing or rewarding elements of the democratization process. *Assistance* is achieved mainly through the provision of foreign aid and has been placed by those who have attempted typologies of democracy promotion on the;

...least coercive end of the interventionist spectrum [and] not surprisingly includes the least controversial and most widely adopted forms of international democracy promotion: the pursuit of classic diplomacy and the provision of foreign aid (Schraeder, 2002: 220).

Consequently the method can be more easily disassociated from connections to broader geo-political objectives. Activities are depoliticized, less confrontational, and less punitive in cases of resistance. The global backlash against democracy promotion may go some way in explaining the general shift toward *Assistance* and *Support* in a world where democracy partners increasingly seek to resist or push against democratizing forces (Bridoux and Kurki, 2014: 58).

The important and defining characteristic of *Democracy Assistance* however as a particular means of promoting democracy is the recognition that the 'primary motive force for democratization is and must be internal to the country in question' (Burnell, 2000: 9). That is, external actors lend support to local drivers of democracy. Electoral assistance to the state, technical support to the political parties and sharing best practices may characterise such *assistance* offered to targets. *Democracy Support* can be seen as occupying an even further end of the spectrum. Closely associated with *assistance*, the emphasis however is on support given to local actors to develop the architecture of democracy rather than any imposing of those structures or ideas from without.

1.1.2 The broader picture

The spectrum of types outlined above have been categorized as ‘political’ promotion (see Carothers, 2009; Diamond, 1996) – explicit attempts at promoting democracy specifically. It is supported by the notion that democracy is a universal value relevant and able to take hold regardless of culture (see Sen, 1999). Political promoters regard democracy as an intrinsically good thing which leads to socio-economic prosperity, good governance and legal practice and a healthy respect for human rights. ‘...democratization [is viewed] as a process of political struggle in which the political actors who can be clearly identified as democrats contend with the nondemocratic forces’ (Carothers, 2009: 7). Political aid is therefore opportunistic, risk-taking and more confrontational, like assisting a boxer in a bout at ‘important conjunctural moments with the hope of catalytic effects’ (Carothers, 2009: 5).

But democracy promotion can be understood in a broader context. The promotion and establishment of human rights is regarded as priority for the UN for example (Joyner, 2002: 147-172), and can be understood as a specific purpose in and of itself rather than an attempt to promote democracy. Legal reform can also be seen as a distinct aim; far smaller or more specific in scope than democracy and again not exclusive to democracies. The governance agenda on the other hand is particularly broad; a political, economic and administrative reform exercise – it’s an agenda far broader than democracy (Burnell, 2000: 19).

Governance projects are frequently present within international development programmes and can be referred to as a ‘developmental’ approach to democracy promotion (see Carothers, 2009). However, the political and developmental approaches should not be understood as competing models, as Burnell argues,

For example, the increasingly popular idea of “democratic governance” as furthered by the Inter-American Development Bank sees democracy and governance as “two faces of the same coin”, linking together the norms, procedures and institutions that must be in place if there are to be effective, efficient and open public policies. (Burnell, 2000: 19)

Democracy for the developmental approach is seen as a contributing factor to socioeconomic development but not an intrinsic good or an objective in itself.

Practitioners believe the development process to be slow and ‘iterative’ (Carothers, 2009: 9), with the possibility of making substantial socioeconomic progress without democracy, or even as the prerequisite of democracy. Theories of ‘sequencing’ and preconditioning democratic progress have been developed by development scholars; an anathematic idea to the political aid community. There is a fear that politicization and a confrontational approach would jeopardize the cooperative relationships nurtured with governments, engendering in turn an further aversion to the politicization of their aid.

Attempts to promote human rights, good governance, and legal reform are understood as means of laying the foundations for democratic society and can thus be considered a key form of democracy promotion. With regard to the exploration of sub-states, this incorporation of an ever wider field of activities. In exploring the democracy promotion activities of sub-states therefore, we must not discount any international development programmes wherein much of the good governance, legal reform, and human rights projects can be found.

1.1.3 What is the “democracy” in democracy promotion?

In returning to Hobson and Kurki’s (2012: 3) open definition of democracy promotion, it is notable that the particular model of democracy being promoted need not be a given. Academics have observed however, that global democracy promotion coalesces around a specific model or at least a specific range along the spectrum of democracy (Burnell, 2000; Burnell and Youngs, 2010). There is a perception amongst academic commentators, with an overwhelming dominance of US and western actors in the field, that the democracy in question can be generalized as a market-orientated, representative, liberal democracy which either causes or is an accompanying element of wider socioeconomic development, the rule of law and human rights.

This particular understanding of democracy can be placed within (and partly explained by) its historical context. Kurki (2013: Chapter 2) traces the link between economic governance and democracy from the founders of political liberal thought and thinkers such as Mill, Locke and Adam Smith through to twenty first century reform and neo-liberalism. Beate Jahn (2012: 55) meanwhile, notes how John Locke overcame the potentially contradictory relationship between economic liberalism and democracy

while also noting the complementary relationship between democracy, political liberalism, and individual rights.

The development and influence of empirical democratic theory offers a further indication as to why it takes the form it does. Much influenced by such theorists as Robert Dahl (1961), democracy is presented as a description of reality rather than a goal or set of values; “democracy” exists in the real world and it can be described, identified and therefore replicated. Schumpeter’s (1976) instrumentalization of democracy further enriches this understanding; viewing it as a collection of instruments which may be wielded as a means of achieving desirable market conditions rather than an end in and of itself; a minimalist or functionalist market-liberal democracy.

Kurki, following empirical studies of states, IFIs, NGOs and development foundations, offers several key conclusions which further enhances the picture of democracy promotion today. 1) The democracy is implicitly rather than explicitly liberal and the practice increasingly depoliticized and distanced from big “L” liberalism. 2) The democracy is increasingly context-sensitive; ‘No longer do democracy promoters aim to coercively push an unproblematic one-size-fits-all approach to democracy support’ (Kurki, 2013: 217). 3) Nevertheless, the democracy still consists of liberal ideals albeit with 4) extra-liberal elements present. For example, IFIs place an emphasis on some social democratic notions of equality and participation (2013: 218). 5) There is a growing consensus not only on the methodology employed but also on the legitimacy of the practice – it is the “right” thing to do, and there is a “right” way to do it. 6) Opposition to this consensus and any challenge or raising of alternatives is dismissed as foolish or ‘dangerous’ (2013: 218). 7) Finally, civil support organizations and private actors “do” the promoting on the ground with support delivery increasingly if not totally privatized.

Some variation and temporal development in the particular model of democracy being promoted has been mapped (see Bridoux and Kurki, 2014; Kurki, 2013: 146-172), but ‘a tendency towards consensus on liberal democracy is more pressing than interest in exploring the contestation over (liberal) democracy’s meaning’ (Kurki, 2013: 215). The

consensus regarding what democracy “is” can also be seen within much of the academic literature.

Most studies work within a paradigm which sees democracy as an uncontested good, and crucially as a concept, the meaning of which is self evidently captured by Western liberal democratic understanding of democracy (Kurki, 2013: 6).

Even recent literature searching for original approaches and policy solutions to address the issues raised by the backlash against democracy promotion (see, Burnell and Youngs, 2010; McFaul, 2010; Carothers, 2006; 2008), remain concerned with policy dilemmas or core questions of why and how democracy should be promoted rather than delving into more fundamental territory such as the nature of the democracy being promoted. Academic debates regarding the applicability of democracy to various contexts worldwide such as the Journal of Democracy’s focused issue on the meaning of the concept (see Braizat, 2010; Bratton, 2010; Cheeseman, 2010; Diamond, 2010), also tended to implicitly conform to a particular objective and minimalist notion of democracy which can be measured and quantified.

Consequently, it is argued that; ‘Despite the considerable insights generated, much of this scholarship has been limited, and perhaps even distorted, by certain assumptions that have been uncritically accepted and repeated’ (Hobson and Kurki, 2012: 215). Kurki further warns against omission of such conceptual debates as to do so fails to treat democracy as what it is, namely something political;

...failure to probe the conceptual underpinnings of democracy support is an important, and consequential, weakness of current democracy support scholarship and practice... [the literature on the topic takes an instrumentalist approach]... Such approaches depoliticize democracy support practice – a practice once conceived (rightly) as deeply normative and ideological in nature! (Kurki, 2013: 3)

Scholars have emphasized therefore that the democracy being promoted abroad is a relatively narrow, uncontested market-liberal model. It is a model that is minimalist in its understanding, consisting often of quantifiable characteristics. To many, it is a depoliticized governance model that is being promoted around the world, key insights that support broader theoretical positions discussed later. Failure to engage with the

understanding of democracy however is perceived as a weakness of much of the literature on the topic. An important consideration in order to better understand and contextualize sub-state democracy promotion will be the particular type or model of democracy being promoted, and where sub-state democracy promotion could or should be located with regard within the democracy promotion world.

1.2 Who does it and how do they do it?

There is some agreement within the democracy promotion literature regarding the key actors in the field. If sub-states are to be understood with regard to current actors, brief overview of the key actors will be of value. This section aims to do so.

Western States are key actors that sub-contract their democracy promotion to “middle-men” – the foundations and organizations – that then design and subcontract specific projects to private companies and NGOs. The role of such foundations, as well as an industry of NGOs is key to understanding state-funded “political” and “developmental” democracy promotion. Equally important are the ramifications of accepting funding from, and being politically linked to states and their governments. International organizations meanwhile have risen to prominence over the past few decades as another distinctive group of donors and conductors of international democracy promotion. This section will explore the key actors within democracy promotion, and consider the key themes related to those actors and their activities.

1.2.1 States

The US has been explicitly promoting democracy since the Wilson administration’s declarations during the First World War at least, if not since its formative years and Thomas Jefferson’s hopes of a global democratic revolution. It is the most notable state engaged in the promotion of democracy, spending around \$2.8bn on democracy support in 2013, while the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, and France are also prominent Western states that promote democracy (Bridoux and Kurki, 2014: 24).

The “assistance” of such states is commonly coordinated by quasi-governmental development institutes or political foundations, receiving donations from the state while contracting and coordinating programmes in the partner state. For instance, the

US Department of State plays a key role in setting the high level coordination, developing a diplomatic relationship that will facilitate entry, and ensuring that democracy and human rights are prominent within US foreign policy and its engagement with those other countries. The State Department can even use its diplomatic muscle to incentivise other states to comply with a democracy agenda. But the bulk of the development assistance itself is administered by institutes and foundations such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the US Congress funded National Endowment for Democracy (NED), that itself operates through four affiliated institutes including the political party-affiliated National Democratic Institute (NDI), and the International Republican Institute (IRI).

The funding by the state of separate institutions or foundations to manage the work is a common trend amongst states. Other Western states have created similar institutions to guide and manage both their political and developmental assistance. It has been claimed that at least 63 political foundations exist in Europe (Kurki, 2013: 180). German programmes example for are managed and delivered by the *stiftungen* or coordinated by the semi-official development body the *Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit* then outsourced to NGOs. The British Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) operates from the UK. Funded mainly by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), its Board of Governors is appointed by the FCO and much of its work is carried out by British political parties and legislative staff giving assistance to civil society, parliaments, or training political parties and individuals. Burnell notes that the Foundation's work;

...illustrate[s] the collaborative and sub-contracting nature of democracy assistance, for, with funds from the Department for International Development as well as the FCO, the Foundation has engaged the British Council as well as Britain's political parties in delivering the programmes (Burnell, 2000: 55).

Indeed, the foundations are often the “middle men” of international democracy promotion, taking money from state governments and legislatures, then setting the strategies, and subcontracting specific projects to another set of actors; the NGOs, private companies, and specialist groups that engage “on the ground” with the partner state.

However the shifting priorities of foreign policy, political relations within the state and bureaucracy, an unclear mandate for some of the development work, and the use of aid as part of wider strategic politicking are the root of key failings (see Carothers, 2009b; Hook, 2002). Consequently, in the case of USAID for example;

...the democracy and governance work suffers from inflexibility and rigidity; is slow, overly bureaucratic, and often mechanistic; lacks innovation and frequently relies on cookie-cutter approaches; conforms more to Washington demands or designs than to local realities; and tends to be bloated in country contexts that are already swimming in aid resources yet paltry in places starved for assistance (Carothers, 2009b: 18).

Time and again therefore, whether in promoting democracy or good governance through development, the relationship between the donor state and the foundation is a key consideration. Political freedom and security of funding can encourage a broad range of responsive programmes in the vein of the ideal espoused by some of the recent revisionists of the practice (McFaul, 2010; Burnell and Youngs, 2010). However the reverse, domestic politicking, uncertain funding arrangements and stiff competition for the outsourced contracts results in being overly responsive to the donor rather than the target society. These mainly domestic concerns must also be taken into account while attempting to paint a picture of the motives and methods of sub states.

The more overt, political link with the donor can also jeopardise the effectiveness of the aid in the partner country. "Co-option" is a concept referring to the contamination of the client – the organization carrying out the development work – by the donor – the funding state. A state's political-historical status can cast a shadow over the credibility, legitimacy, or acceptability of the contracted NGO.

Strongmen--some of them elected officials--have begun to publicly denounce Western democracy assistance as illegitimate political meddling. They have started expelling or harassing Western NGOs and prohibiting local groups from taking foreign funds--or have started punishing them for doing so (Carothers, 2006: 55).

Co-option, as we see, can be the cause of a backlash for the NGOs carrying out the democracy promotion "on the ground". Co-option is not inevitable however and;

...there are no universal relationships between increasing dependence on official aid, and particular trends in NGO programming, performance,

legitimacy and accountability. Context, circumstances and the quality of relationships between the actors are of crucial importance (Edwards and Hulme, 1996: 969).

It is however, an issue that must be explored if the project is to contextualize the democracy promotion of sub-states, and place their activities alongside other actors.

The experiences of states, particularly the donor-client relationship, highlights many of the potential issues surrounding the subcontracting of international aid. This relationship can be identified as a key theme when attempting to understand actors. In exploring the international development programmes of sub-states therefore, there is a need to appreciate the possible influence, even dominance, of the broader state's political-historical status with potential partners. It must be considered with regard to sub-state policy and activity and the consequences for the donor-client relationship.

1.2.2 International Organizations

International organizations have been categorized as another type of democracy promoter. Specifically, the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), and international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are identified as such actors. The EU and UN can engage in a state-like manner, setting broad political parameters to any assistance or aid provided. Indeed the UN is often seen as a key normalizer of international development norms, manifested in their declarations of human rights or development goals.

Within the institutions and organizations however, there are specific instruments that are used to design, manage, and subcontract the democracy or development projects with international partners. These include the EU's European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), and the EuropeAid, or the UN's Democracy Fund. The World Bank and IMF meanwhile offer good governance support and anti-corruption assistance. The IFIs also agree broad restructuring strategies with partners such as the Poverty Reduction Strategies that set the path for the socioeconomic and governance reform of partners in receipt of funding and support.

Meanwhile, networks or umbrella organizations of smaller democracy foundations and NGOs have also been established. Organizations such as the European Network of

Political Foundations, a network of over 60 member foundations arranges for members to share good practice, access funding, and advocates on their behalf (ENoP, 2016).

While the relevance of these organizations is not immediately apparent with regard to sub-states, they do play an important role in broad “agenda setting” and establishing the norms mainstreaming certain practices worldwide. Institutions such as the UN and EU in particular are key establishers of development norms, often enshrined in declarations such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), while internationally accepted criteria for evaluating reform and development are often designed by the IFIs to support their assistance partnerships.

1.2.3 NGOs and a development “industry”

NGOs have risen in prominence not only to conduct the majority of the development and democracy projects of foundations and organizations, but also to dominate the discourse, policy formation, and even to dictate spending levels of Western governments. This is particularly the case with regard to international development, where Western governments have willingly withdrawn their political involvement and surrendered control of the agenda to the development industry.

NGOs, along with specialist private companies, carry out much of the work “on the ground”. This entails bidding for contracts from the state-funded foundations and institutions. Groups often specialize in specific areas of democracy or development aid. Alongside governance reform, by promoting citizenship, running advocacy campaigns, small scale participative schemes and sometimes as transnational social movements, NGOs have become a key promoters of democratic behaviour and norms abroad. As noted however, these groups can suffer the brunt of the backlash due to issues created by its link to the donor state. But the donor-client relationship can also work in reverse, with the client influencing the donor. This is particularly the case with regard to international development.

NGOs have gained the ability to participate and influence in all aspects of global politics, particularly through the UN’s Economic and Social Council which gives access to governments around the world (see Willets, 2011: 32-64). Following the perceived

failure of the modernization view of development – large scale macroeconomic structural reform programmes – several scholars have noted the rise of NGOs as leaders of an alternative, civil society-based model of development anchored by the notion of good governance (Abrahamsen, 2000: 1-24; 52-56). The access NGOs enjoyed within global fora, facilitated the propagation of the good governance and civil society model of development.

By 1989 the World Bank had officially adopted the good governance agenda (van Cranenburgh, 1999: 93-94). The Development Assistance Committee (DAC), an influential group of key donors within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) had meanwhile created a working group on Participatory Development and Good Governance by 1994. Meanwhile the European Council on Democracy, Human Rights and Development of November 1991, enshrined the Community's policy in the area, committing itself to the same model. NGOs have transformed what international development is, and re-established its norms and practices, within these influential and agenda-setting global fora.

They have also successfully pushed the model onto states. Grugel (1999) for example, looking at OXFAM, Christian Aid, Save the Children and WATER-WORLD, notes how the UK Government saw NGOs as holding the necessary range of professional skills and resources to design, as well as to deliver their development programmes, consequently becoming major donors of those NGOs. NGOs have come to co-design the development model as well as administer the resulting projects. Over 200 British NGOs are now in receipt of government funding and due to the increasing privatization;

The boundaries are slowly being dissolved between official development cooperation, administered through the Department for International Development (DFID), and cooperation through NGOs, financed either totally or in part through the state (Grugel, 1999: 127)

The picture of the growth in NGO involvement was reflected throughout the West by the turn of the millennium; from 1992-95 for example, the European Commission co-funded over 4,000 projects in Latin America through NGOs, spending over Euros200m which represented between 50-70% of the total costs of the projects (Freres, 1999: 54). Some have even claimed that;

They have moved from subordinate and antagonistic positions to dominant positions in the global networks of power. With a seat at every official policy table, virtually present in every corner of the globe, delivering expertise on a wide range of issues, NGOs are now run like multinational firms, by professionals whose career trajectories perfectly illustrate the new complementarity between NGOs and international organizations. Previously remote from each other, these institutional worlds are now getting closer as their boundaries are blurred and as a same personnel circulates between them or simultaneously occupies positions in both fields (Guilhot, 2005: 4).

With regard to development assistance therefore, we must acknowledge the rise of an “industry”, made up largely of transnational NGOs and global fora. The “industry” is dominated and guided by a particular discourse that stresses the need to develop good governance and the infrastructure of at least a minimalist form of democracy – this discourse is examined later. The role of NGOs therefore cannot be dismissed as merely the “boots on the ground” of international development. They have become the key transnational industry that guides, sets norms, and develops the practices of international development. The influence of this industry must be taken into account when exploring sub-state international development.

What is missing from the literature on democracy promotion actors and their methods are sub-states. There are no accounts of whether they promote democracy, how they do so, or whether they can be understood in a similar manner to states or other actors.

1.3 The backlash

Recent years however, have been noted for the absence of that 1990s enthusiasm and the hegemonic domination the concept could lay claim to. The democratic wave had crashed against something by the mid-2000s, and the geopolitical context no longer allows for the domination and unopposed promotion and espousal of a single form of governance. Not only has the “wave” peaked, but in some cases it is argued to be receding as governments backtrack and renege on the democratic reforms of earlier years. Several reasons are thought to have contributed to what has become accepted as a “backlash” against democracy promotion. Crucially however, it is the context within which the activities of sub-states over the past 10-15 years must be considered.

Thomas Carothers (2006; 2008; 2010) can be credited with the clearest and most explicit attempt to explain the backlash. For him the phenomenon is manifested in the backtracking on much of the openness introduced into Russian, Caucasus and Central Asian societies; China's process of de-liberalisation which has reversed the political reform gains of the 90s; and even Central and Eastern Europe's struggles with 'vexing political standoffs' such as the rise of the far right in Poland and political conflict in Hungary (Carothers, 2008: 9). Compounding matters is the economic success of China that debunks the notion that only democracy brings economic prosperity – there are other models of governance capable of doing that.

The Bush administration's (2001-2009) aggressive prosecution of its war on terror in the name of democracy meanwhile has prompted strong resistance to democratic imposition.

This association of democracy promotion with what is widely viewed as unauthorised military force, violations of rights and a horrendous level of violence in Iraq, has been devastating to the legitimacy of the concept of democracy promotion (Carothers, 2008: 11-12).

The change in administration has not brought about a dramatic change in the situation either;

In the US, despite the many hopes invested in the Obama administration, and the many Clinton administration appointees flocking back to Washington, DC, at the beginning of 2009, it is not realistic to suppose that unipolarity is about to be restored, or that the severe damage done to global democratic idealism during the Bush administration can readily be undone (Whitehead, 2010: 39)

The contested nature of democracy and the difficulty in measuring its progress also makes the assessment of democracy promotion a difficult task. Revisions of the practice during the 1990s and early 2000s now raise serious questions as to the efficacy of the activities at the time. Carothers was quick to point to the fact that the mushrooming in democracy aid in truth took off after the "third wave" had begun (1999), so total credit could not be attributed to international factors. Larry Diamond has expanded the revision further arguing that Huntington's wave has produced 'hollow' democratic regimes, vulnerable to a reverse wave (1999: 24-63), and the democratization process

has failed to achieve broad and 'deep' legitimation (1999: 65). The key task of democratizers for him, is to deepen and consolidate democracy in the target societies by institutionalizing the values and practice of democratic politics. Implicit in this criticism is the assertion that the methods and practices of promoting democracy do not and may never have contributed to meaningful democratization abroad.

The backlash has on the one hand intensified the practical need to depoliticise the practice and to retreat further into technical or procedural approaches to the promotion of democracy. "On the ground", this would involve either the promoters themselves refusing to acknowledge the political nature of their work, or tacit agreements with non-democratic governments to operate informally and without legal registration (Carothers, 2010: 65-67).

Consequently, international development and its promotion of good governance has risen in prominence amongst practitioners seeking to appear less confrontational or political; 'by reasserting a commitment to the objective through a more explicit association with the widely legitimate goal of development' (Carothers, 2010: 67). This seems to point to a deeper suspicion that the practice, and democratic governance in general, is suffering from a crisis of legitimacy.

Meanwhile, the challenging environment has prompted scholars to attempt speculate regarding how the backlash can be overcome (see McFaul 2010; Burnell and Youngs, 2010; Carothers, 2008). But even these innovative policy rethinks have been suggested to have their limits (Kurki and Hobson, 2012: 3), and a further, more fundamental reappraisal of the practice is currently taking place, delving into the conceptual issues at the heart of democracy promotion and exploring the conventions that govern the key concepts at play – namely the nature of democracy itself. Ultimately there is the claim that;

Because democracy is a complicated political system, which includes some values that are universally understood and accepted and others that are far from being universally accepted in many countries, its ideological appeal is limited (Ottaway, 2010: 57).

The backlash is an essential context within which democracy promotion must be understood. It must also inform any understanding of sub-state democracy promotion if it is to be relevant.

1.4 Understanding Democracy Promotion

International relations (IR) theory explores democracy promotion and offers various ways in which the activity, its actors, and their methods can be understood. If any project exploring the democracy promotion of sub-states is to be relevant and contribute to the understanding of the practice, it must relate to this broader IR literature. In exploring theories of democracy promotion, themes and concepts are exposed that have become common – if disputed – amongst scholarly attempts to explain why democracy promotion takes the form it does. While such themes and concepts can anchor this project's exploration of sub-states, the overview also identifies gaps and possibilities for this project to contribute to the existing literature and understanding of the activity. This section also notes the absence of sub-states from such IR approaches and begins to answer the first research question directly.

The literature and its various perspectives, tend to dispute the answer to a central question regarding the activity; why is democracy promoted? Answers lead to a focus on the political agency of governments and states, almost instinctively encouraging a consideration of whether democracy promotion is a means of pursuing interests, promoting values, increasing power, expanding hegemony, or a combination of such motivations. These studies are perhaps naturally state-centric, and often fail to satisfactorily account for the role of other actors such as IFIs or NGOs, and there is no mention of sub-states. Critical perspectives approach the study of the activity differently however, and tend to focus and extrapolate from detailed studies of the methods employed. Nonetheless, even these fail to adequately accommodate sub-states into the broader framework.

Proponents of democracy promotion can also be found operating within a liberal internationalist paradigm, occasionally referred to as optimists (Bridoux and Kurki, 2014: 38). Their accounts are grounded in the belief that core liberal principles can be spread, that they do allow for democracy and human rights to develop, and that this is

an intrinsic good that will contribute to a more peaceful world (see Kegley Jr. and Hermann, 2002: 15-29; Mandelbaum, 2007; McFaul, 2010). The role of promoting states and international organizations in particular are often emphasized by such perspectives (see Pevehouse, 2005; Pevehouse and Russett, 2006).

There is a concurrent belief that promoting democracy is also in the interest of the states doing so. Unsurprisingly, liberal internationalists are often advocates of democratic peace theory. This allows a slight detachment from accusations that optimists believe that states are altruistic in their promotion of democracy, and the claim that it is a reasonable or realistic approach to international relations. Importantly, this viewpoint is believed to be common amongst practitioners of democracy promotion.

These positions are important and, it can be claimed, underpin much of the practice and policy-making on democracy promotion. Many practitioners believe that democracy promotion is compatible with altruistic ends and also simultaneously with instrumental interest agendas. Promotion of democracy is then the best of both worlds... (Bridoux and Kurki, 2014: 38)

The theoretical perspective is often implicit within the work of scholars who prefer to address more “problem-solving” aspects of the activity. Much focus is on the implementation of democracy promotion policies generally (see Burnell, 2000; Burnell and Youngs; Whitehead, 1996; 2002; Youngs, 2010), or in specific cases (see Wolff, 2011; Teixeira, 2008; Zeeuw, 2005).

Realists however, have developed a strong criticism of the optimistic view of democracy promotion. Their focus on democracy promotion is unsurprisingly concerned with the pursuit of interests. Structural or Waltzian realists argue against the validity of democratic peace theory and have even suggested that to pursue such notions is dangerous for the interests of great powers. Some argue for example that US democracy promotion would lead to ‘disastrous military interventions abroad, strategic overextension, and the relative decline of American power’ (Layne, 1995: 329). Some realists do however believe that democracy can reduce mistrust, and is indeed, as liberal internationalists argue, in the interests of states (see Schweller, 2000: 42-43; Kydd, 1997). Regardless of the debate, the realist interpretation of democracy

promotion is, unsurprisingly, overwhelmingly state-centric and concerns the instrumental pursuit of interests.

From a realist perspective, it could be argued for example, that by diverting resources to the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), President Reagan developed a weapon for taking the ideological fight to the USSR. An overtly political approach to promoting the 'infrastructure of democracy' (Reagan, 1982), was more palatable domestically than paramilitary sponsorship or the support lent to authoritarian regimes. The War on Terror has been read in a similar fashion. The Bush administration's promotion of democracy was again seen as a 'vaccination', this time against radical Islam (Carothers, 2003: 84), that could and should be administered abroad.

Such arguments have led critical scholars in particular to remark on the complex and sometimes contradictory attitudes adopted by states toward the promotion of democracy. Western states have happily "propped up" undemocratic governments if it is in their interests as well as espousing democratic values elsewhere. Realists may shrug such accusations and argue that the hypocrisy merely supports their view; it's about interests, not values – sometimes it's worth promoting democracy, sometimes it isn't. Ultimately we may turn to Schweller to sum up the realist view that democracy promotion is a foreign policy tool;

In the end, I suspect that Americans are far more interested in maintaining global hegemony – which the Clinton administration seemed to believe could be achieved solely by further opening markets to American goods and culture – than they are in the promotion of democracy per se (Schweller, 2000: 61).

With regard to sub-states, it is difficult to see how relevant such an explanation can be. Liberal internationalists and realists have failed to address the existence of sub-states, let alone their interests or whether democracy promotion serves those interests. There are no accounts of sub-states.

Nonetheless, issues of (sub-)national interests must become a consideration if the project is to relate to the core IR debates. What role for example, do sub-states play within the broader context of the central state's promotional work? How much coordination, cooperation, or control is involved between the central and sub state with

regard to promoting democracy? Exploring the notion of (sub-)national interests, and the possibility that they are pursued by promoting democracy, is one that may be explored with a view to contributing to IR scholarship.

This is not to suggest however that non-realists do not see foreign policy and national interest motivations behind the promotion of democracy. Critical scholars for example, curious about the inconsistencies of democracy promotion, have also argued that democracy promotion is a cover for the state's strategic interests;

A US stance in favour of democracy helps get the Congress, the bureaucracy, the media, the public, and elite opinion to back US policy... The democracy agenda, in short, is a kind of legitimacy cover for our more basic strategic objectives (Robinson, 1996 : 73).

Critical scholars have also explored these aspects, and concluded more specifically that the real “interest” behind promoting democracy is a more structural, intended to extend and propagate a global capitalist market. Jean Grugel (2002: 118) for example, has suggested that; ‘democratization is a part of a wider process of deepening hegemonic control over the developing and semi-peripheral world’. Globalization brings states closer still and that regular contact between the periphery and the core becomes more common. The periphery is supported by the core through democracy and development support, and finds itself ‘locked in’ to a particular model of development – dependent upon market openness and a particular form of liberal democracy (Grugel, 2002). Grugel establishes Western states as the “core” and generally sees developing nations as the periphery. She firmly links the democratization efforts and the particular model of democracy promoted, with the perpetuation of an exploitative economic relationship between “developed” and “developing” worlds. Some go even further, suggesting that democracy promotion is a form of ‘neo-colonialism’ instigated by western countries (Shaw, 1991). The question of sub-states’ role within this structure remains to be explained however, or even acknowledged.

Neo-Gramscians offer an account of democracy promotion which encompasses the other actors such as NGOs and IFIs as well as states. The focus is often upon the model of democracy in question, claiming that through its exposition and deconstruction we gain insight into deeper, more hidden motive and agenda behind US and Western

democracy promotion; 'Promoting democratization or defending human rights are privileged channels for the exportation of political technologies, economic recipes or judicial models' (Guilhot, 2005: 8). Specifically, the particularly liberal and market orientated conception of democracy prevalent amongst promoters is seen as a weapon or tool for maintaining and propagating liberal hegemony and world order.

Robinson's 'Promoting Polyarchy' (1996) exemplifies this approach by arguing that the aim, through the very minimalist conception of democracy which de-radicalizes citizens, is to promote 'low intensity democracy' amongst the developing nations. The spread of a particular model of democracy establishes a consensus on the model of economic and political government which diminishes any challenge to the economic system, leaving the US and West to remain the main beneficiaries of global capitalism. Robinson's democracies are tools that create consensus over economic management in the developing world.

Meanwhile, Guilhot's account (2005) expands the explanatory "reach" of the theory further, arguing in turn that NGOs have become essential to the process of building the consensus around the model of democracy to be promoted. As the actors that "do" the promotion, he sees NGOs as 'double agents', embedded within the democratising states while simultaneously developing and promoting the hegemony-creating democracy described by Robinson. The newly professionalized NGO's role is central to depoliticizing and repackaging the liberal, status-quo democracy as an acceptable, emancipatory agenda, simultaneously hiding the politics of what it "really means". This in turn offers some explanation of the recent developments in the field such as the depoliticization of activities and the incorporation of new actors. In this sense, the theoretical incorporation of NGOs into the framework has offered important insights into their nature as actors and their role (highlighted above) in developing policy (see also Taylor 1999; Grugel 1999).

The approach has been repeatedly countered in the literature however. It has been suggested that the 'now standard critique of liberal democracy do not weather the scrutiny of empirical evidence' (Youngs 2012: 100). Youngs continues to build his argument suggesting that Western actors are not overly-zealous liberal-marketeers and

that critical perspectives often fail to present a complete picture of the actors involved in democracy support – perhaps implicitly suggesting that the Neo-Gramscian literature tends to be very theoretical in its nature, and lacking in empirical support. Carothers holds no truck with the neo-Gramscian argument either, suggesting that the approach has fallen into a ‘trap of hewing to just one narrow line of critique that would seek to dismiss the whole enterprise as ill-intentioned and ill-conceived’ (Carothers, 2012: xiv). Another accusation comes from Kurki, who argues that even these critical accounts are guilty of missing the nuance of democracy and ‘...to assume an overly singular understanding of the ideology of democracy support’ (Kurki. 2013: 10).

There is a further problem with the Marxist and Neo-Gramscian accounts of democracy promotion; sub-states are absent, and their role within the broader structure is unclear. There is some focus in broader literature upon the mechanisms of capital on the subnational level; technological, market, financial and regulatory denationalization and localization which establish capitalism within local contexts (see Sassen, 2013). The focal points are interactive technologies that reposition the local; from a field where global capitalism plays out to an arena where those forces are created. But sub-states are not understood as actors or sources of political agency – only spaces where the forces of global capital are (also) at play. Robinson on the other hand is equally unsatisfactory in his account – and a footnote is all that he offers on the topic – of sub-states and decentralised governance structures.

The movement towards the decentralization of the national state, such as “devolution” of administrative powers from the central government to local governments in the United States, or the transfer to municipal governments of formerly central state activities in Latin America, should be seen in light of changes in the state under globalization. No longer able to sustain the activities that provide for popular legitimacy, central states attempt to abdicate social welfare responsibilities and the costs of continued social polarization through the decentralization of such functions to local authorities (Robinson, 2008: 37).

This view fails to take account of localized political forces at play and actively “pulling” power down to the regional level, observed most notably – but certainly not exclusively – amongst nationalist movements. Furthermore, central states such as the UK for example explicitly reserves control over social welfare policy and expenditure and even

holds – through its funding process for devolved administrations – a relatively tight grip on the overall spending in areas such as healthcare, social care and education. The Marxist and Gramscian understanding of devolution is itself oversimplified, and lacks any engagement with variables and factors (explored in chapter two) that students of sub-states would claim are integral to their understanding. Most notably is the denial of the agency of sub-states, a fundamental divide between this particular IR perspective, and all studies of sub-state international activity.

These contradictions and oversights are yet to be tackled, posing a challenge to the Marxist interpretation of decentralization and devolution on the one hand and on the other raise significant questions for any attempt to incorporate sub-states as actors into the broader framework for understanding democracy promotion and IR generally. Concisely, for the purposes of this project, the explanatory potential of the theoretical perspective is deeply unsatisfactory.

A more recent approach to the practice can be seen amongst those taking a Foucauldian perspective to its study, notably making use of the concept of ‘governmentality’. The approaches seek to deconstruct the methods used to promote democracy and expose the underlying power relations at work. Governmentality scholars have enriched the study of democracy promotion and exposed an implicit bias toward liberal market orientated democracy present within the methods employed by promoters.

Abrahamsen (2000) and Ayres (2006) both suggest that due to Western dominance, the discourse and practice of international development, the model of democracy present in and promoted through governance schemes is one which is compatible with and echoes the pro-liberal, market democracies. Successful development policy not only embeds this particular model within the target states but makes the targets themselves responsible for its successful implementation and regulation (Abrahamsen, 2000; Ayers, 2006). The very ideals espoused; elections, rule of law, human rights, and good accountable and participatory government are not natural or neutral aspects of democracy, but rather highly ideological aims (Ayres, 2006: 322-323).

Julia Hearn is another example who, while looking at support to South Africa in the 1990s, suggests that despite unprecedented amounts of international aid, there are two

main consequences of democracy promotion. Firstly, that the concept of democracy has been redefined, away from ideas of social democracy and toward a procedural and minimalist conception. Secondly, stability remains the priority for the promoters due to the methods of promoters and their targets for funding within civil society. Consequently the same intensely exploitative economic system remains but is now unchallenged and democracy is a form of 'system maintenance' rather than a means of restructuring of the social order (Hearn, 2000).

We may return to Abrahamsen (2000) however for a more significant contribution, outlining as she does the construction of 'development discourse' which has come to dominate the aid industry internationally. Also using a Foucauldian approach she emphasizes the dominant role a particularly Western and liberal conception of democracy plays in the formulation of the development discourse and the good governance agenda. Power is seen to reside in the state, not in society; to take power away from the state is therefore to empower society. The market is understood within the discourse as the realm of freedom and liberty but without an acceptance that such economic liberalism can actually reinforce socioeconomic inequalities. There is no critique of the market, neither is there an acceptance that the state could intervene in society to reduce inequality. Good governance therefore always comes back to ideas of economic liberalization, dressed up as powerful concepts such as 'empowerment', 'democracy' and the 'release of energies' or 'liberation of society' (Abrahamsen, 2000). The 'emancipatory' agenda meanwhile is 'entirely subordinated to the logic of economic adjustment and neoliberal state reform' (Abrahamsen, 2000: 193).

Good governance within international development projects is consequently a very political concept. Furthermore, the powerful and hegemonic discourse of development coordinates and synchronizes a global move toward a very particular model of democracy through the international development activities. Nonetheless, due in part to the difficult and recent history of African states at the hands of external actors, the development doctrine was portrayed and expressed as a neutral enterprise 'driven by humanitarian desire to universalise wealth rather than by any particular political or ideological objectives' (Abrahamsen, 2000: 12). The de-politicization of development therefore became a distinguishing and important feature. But again, as with other IR

perspectives, there is little to aid with the understanding of sub-state democracy promotion.

1.5 Conclusions

Democracy promotion is a difficult activity to “pin down” for it is potentially as elastic as the concept of democracy. Nonetheless, academic studies of the activity have broadly agreed upon a range of activities that do constitute democracy promotion. This chapter has uncovered a fair notion of what to look for when exploring the activities of sub-states. *Democracy assistance* and *support* are less confrontational means of promoting democracy and conceivable activities for sub-state governments with the capacity and remit to engage abroad.

A further, key observation is the increasing de-politicization of the activity, particularly through its incorporation into international development. Democracy is increasingly promoted implicitly, and arguably, unknowingly by practitioners of development. An exploration of the international development programmes of sub-states, and efforts to promote good governance, are therefore important points for the empirical explorations.

The conceptualization of democracy is also a commonly neglected, but nonetheless integral aspect of democracy promotion. Critical scholars infer key claims from their analysis of the democracy being promoted, while others are accused of neglecting the issue. Considering its role within broader understandings of the activity, an exploration of the model of democracy being promoted by sub-states will allow a further contribution to the IR literature, perhaps corroborating or challenging certain accounts of democracy promotion.

The exploration of actors and their methods has also uncovered several strands that are key to understanding democracy promotion actors. These must therefore remain integral to the exploration of sub-states, if the research is to remain relevant to the broader understanding of democracy promotion actors. Briefly, these strands concern questions regarding a possible (sub-)national interest and its pursuit alongside, or hidden by the promotion of democracy. The donor-client relationship is affected by and

impacts upon all sides of the democracy promotion relationship. The policy formation process, particularly with regard to international development and the influence of dominant discourses and NGOs, is a further strand that has become integral to how the activity is understood.

The review of the democracy promotion literature in the first sections of this chapter has identified the absence of sub-states. Here is a major element of the answer to the first research question, and a significant challenge in understanding sub-state democracy promotion. It also underlines the potential contribution of this project. The review has also begun to answer the second research question, and presented the context to which a better understanding must relate. The empirical investigations of this project, and the subsequent analysis, must relate to the themes, issues, and questions of the scholarship covered in this chapter.

The chapter notes however, that IR scholarship does not offer a framework for the project to adopt with regard to the exploration of sub-states. IR theories do not acknowledge the existence of sub-states, let alone account for and understand their international actorness generally, or as democracy promoters. In their present state, without modification, IR perspectives cannot be employed to analyse and explain the empirical data of this project, or for that matter, offer an answer to the second research question, and a means of understanding sub-state democracy promotion.

Nonetheless, the disputing perspectives converge on some central themes, most notably the key question of motivation – why do actors promote democracy. Is the activity pursued due to a commitment to certain values and ideals, as an instrumental pursuit of interests, or as a cover for hidden interests? The questions raised in this section will further anchor the study, and ensure that the analytical contribution of the project is relevant to the broader IR scholarship, but as noted, the analytical framework cannot be sourced from the IR literature.

In seeking an analytical framework, the project must therefore broaden its scope. Chapter 2 will therefore explore a sub-strand of the diplomacy literature and broader, though disparate scholarship; concisely termed paradiplomacy studies. This small body of literature is concerned with empirical accounts and attempts to theorise and explain

how and why sub-states engage internationally. Due to IR theory's inability to account for sub-states, we must turn to this literature for a theoretical framework that will allow for an understanding of sub-state international activities.

Chapter 2: Sub-states and Paradiplomacy

The exploration of the democracy promotion literature in chapter 1 concluded that IR theory does not account for the activities (or even existence) of sub-states. Nor does the IR literature offer an analytical framework through which the democracy promotion of sub-states can be examined. In an attempt to address the second research question, and develop a means of better understanding sub-state democracy promotion, this chapter seeks to review the paradiplomacy literature, the scholarship concerning the international activities of sub-states, to gain an understanding of how sub-state international activities can be understood.

The limitations of the literature are discussed first and its lack of engagement with the democracy promotion activities of sub-states or the relevant IR literature. The chapter then outlines three main types of paradiplomacy identified, sometimes loosely, sometimes explicitly, by scholars. While economic paradiplomacy is prevalent and a second more multidimensional tier has emerged, of most interest to the project is “political paradiplomacy”; activities that seek socio-political change elsewhere. The chapter proceeds to detail the considerations and factors purported by paradiplomacy scholars to be key in its understanding such as the role of nationalism. A further section explores relevant assertions regarding how sub-states engage in paradiplomacy, namely the theorised ability of sub-states to avoid difficult political constraints, and the influence of transnational communication of ideas and practices. These sections strengthen the answer to the second research question, enabling an understanding of the forces and factors at play when sub-states act internationally, and assists in contextualizing and making relevant to the existing paradiplomacy scholarship, the project’s own account of democracy promotion activities.

Finally, exploring the attempts to theorise and build analytical frameworks will further develop an answer to the second research question. It will support the attempt at developing an approach for better understanding sub-state democracy promotion while remaining relevant to the themes outlined in Chapter 1 and earlier sections of this chapter. Specifically, the key finding beyond establishing the ways in which sub-states act internationally, will be the identification of Andre Lecours’ analytical framework as a means of understanding paradiplomacy. It offers the most advanced means of doing so

while accounting for the paradiplomacy scholarship's emphasis upon structuring factors.

2.1 Challenges of the literature

The literature concerning the international activities of sub-states, what is often termed "paradiplomacy", is disparate, emanating from a range of sub-disciplines of political science. Some perspectives explore sub-state international activity as a means of generating empirical support for broader theories (see Hocking, 1993; Der Derian, 1987), while others engage directly with the phenomenon of paradiplomacy (see Keating, 1999; Kuznetsov, 2015; Lecours, 2002; Lecours and Moreno, 2003; Michelmann, 2007; 2009). Even within those dealing with paradiplomacy directly however, studies examine different variables such as the constitutional set-up (see Crikemans, 2010a; Michelmann, 2007; 2009), or the role of nationalism (Lecours and Moreno, 2003). Indeed Kuznetsov claims that explorations of paradiplomacy fall into eleven different and distinct categories (2015: Chapter 4). Each strand has its own focus and means and context of understanding paradiplomacy as an activity.

The varied terminology employed only serves to highlight the disparity within the field. Even the term paradiplomacy is disputed and alternatives suggested (see Hocking, 1993; Crikemans, 2010). Scholars also use a variety of terms to specify or broaden the type of unit considered to be engaging in paradiplomacy. For example, Hocking's (1993) use of Non Central Governments refers to the governments of states and other federated units; of interest to this particular project. However, the term also alludes to the governments of cities and administrations below the federated level; not the focus of this study. Der Derian's (1987) paradiplomacy meanwhile covers both sub-states – the focus of this project – and individuals like the Pope – not the focus of this project.

Aguire's (1999: 186) warning of a 'hazardous intertextuality' is consequently worthy of consideration when approaching the paradiplomacy literature. The terms "sub-state" and "paradiplomacy" are used in this project, but do not always relate directly to the entire contributions of some paradiplomacy scholars. In this project, paradiplomacy refers to the international activities of sub-states, defined in the introductory chapter as the level of governance immediately below the central state.

Consideration must also be given to the fact that much of the sub-state literature is rooted in the comparative politics method. Consequently, the majority of academic literature is case-specific, dissecting the motivations and methods of particular examples with case-limited attempts to generalize trends, but few efforts to extrapolate explanatory theories (see Lecours 2002: 93).

Another limitation that must be considered is the overwhelming focus within the sub-state literature upon federal states and their constituent entities. This focus may be due to the development of the study itself, beginning as it did with studies of North American cases, but the focus is still largely on federated sub-states in the more recent contributions (see Michelmann, 2009). For this reason, federalism can implicitly seem to be the ‘most important theoretical determinant’ in the literature (Lecours and Moreno, 2003: 269) – a notion which, if discussed is often contested. Giving due regard to unitary states in this project may further combat this implicit theoretical bias.

We have therefore a rather disjointed and disparate literature which is unconnected to broader IR theory. Nevertheless, the scholarship does offer empirical data from which to draw upon in preparation for this project’s specific inquiry. Present also are some theoretical considerations, valuable in attempting to construct a framework for examining and understanding sub-state democracy promotion.

2.2 Sub-states as democracy promoters

The weaknesses of the sub-state literature are accentuated with regard to democracy promotion. Not only is there very little mention of the practice, but the little that is covered is not discussed within the context of the democracy promotion literature examined in chapter 1. Despite the thinness of the literature however, there is a trace of a discussion regarding the theoretical suitability of sub-states to the task of promoting democracy.

Kincaid and Hocking converge on a similar view of sub-states as actors that are particularly well suited to the promotion of democracy. Kincaid presents sub-states as suitable candidates for politically sensitive international activity, echoing the previous sections findings;

...by initiating a policy, providing aid, or conducting negotiations in situations where it would be politically embarrassing, diplomatically awkward, or legally impossible for the nation-state government to do so (Kincaid, 2010).

Something that Hocking also identifies and elaborates upon;

More generally however, NCGs enjoy a degree of legitimacy as the direct representatives of local interests untainted by the failings of national policy-positions on issues (such as labour standards in Third World countries) which national governments will need to balance against broader international policy considerations (Hocking, 1999: 28).

Such views can be compared with Chaloux and Paquin's (2012) work regarding climate change action, and the notion that sub-states can "bypass" difficult political contexts. Kincaid goes further, suggesting that they may consequently be used as international 'proxies' for the central government 'often act[ing] without the political and ideological encumbrances attached to national governments' (Kincaid, 2010).

...state and local officials can also open doors in unofficial ways that would be awkward or impossible for the US government to do officially... At times, state and local officials also provide aid to equivalent governments in another country where it is awkward for the United States to do so, or for the other national government to accept direct US aid (Kincaid, 1999: 128).

A lack of supporting empirical evidence limit such suggestions, but they are nonetheless interesting considerations, particularly when the "backlash" is considered as a context for promoting democracy. Kincaid, again postulating without explicit empirical support, suggests that the very nature and scale of the activities engaged in by sub-states creates an image of them as 'practitioners of goodwill', directly involved with civil-societies in the target states;

Constituent governments also are well suited to promote goodwill abroad through small-scale projects, people-to-people diplomacy, cultural activities, and sports competition, especially non-professional sports activities. This role also allows for substantial participation by civil-society institutions (Kincaid, 2010).

However, they may also be vehicles and proxies for societal groups or NGOs within the sub-state itself.

...they can act as channels through which other actors, particularly non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can articulate their own concerns – thereby using the locality or region as a base for global strategies (Hocking, 1999: 22).

From the very limited discussion of sub-states democracy promotion, they may be understood as potentially ideal actors to promote democracy. However the limitations of this debate must be acknowledged. Firstly, there are no understandings of sub-state democracy promotion, only assertions regarding the type of role they may play within the field. Both authors also hold a particular view of sub-states. Kincaid's studies are concerned with federated entities, particularly US states that have shown very little desire or ability to act in contrast to federal activities. More challenging to his notion of proxies would be a federated entity that challenges or diverges from federal policy. Also, Kincaid's image of democracy promotion is one of a functional activity undertaken for economic reasons – not a political activity. The motivation for promoting democracy is, for Kincaid, an economic one;

If state and local governments wish to open more markets for their constituents' products, and if the Sunbelt states are to resolve their concerns about illegal immigration and drug smuggling from Latin America, they will have to be attentive to the economic and democratic development needs of many countries around the world (Kincaid, 1999: 131).

Hocking meanwhile is primarily concerned with drawing attention to the different way in which sub-states, specifically NCGs act internationally. His aim is to support his central argument that international relations has fundamentally changed in character, and a re-evaluation of diplomacy is required if the role of sub-states is to be understood (Hocking, 1993). Hocking is not overly concerned with the motivations and suitability of sub-states to promoting democracy (itself a concept and a practice which has developed since Hocking's relevant contribution in 1993), only to show that they may be different international actors. These limitations notwithstanding, there is some speculation and suggestion regarding their suitability to promoting democracy internationally, particularly within the context of the "backlash".

2.3 Paradiplomacy

The next three sections outline three broad categories of paradiplomacy and the related strategies for engaging internationally that have been identified by scholars. The categories are loosely based on Lecours' (2008) categorization, itself reflecting the broader scholarship. The final, "political paradiplomacy" category differs from Lecours' however, in order to allow for a specific focus upon activities most likely to promote democracy.

Examined firstly is economic paradiplomacy, the most common and functional, overwhelmingly concerned with the promotion of trade and attracting inward investment. This sometimes develops into the second, a more multidimensional type of paradiplomacy in a range of fields involving educational, cultural, or scientific cooperation for example. This has been loosely termed "co-operational paradiplomacy". Political paradiplomacy meanwhile is deliberately separated in this project. It is defined as an engagement in a specific activity that seeks to affect socio-political change elsewhere.

Exploring these accounts will reveal what sub-states do, as well as why they engage in such activities. The sections will assist in contextualizing and informing the empirical contribution of this project by gaining insight into the kinds of factors and variables that may explain sub-state international activities with a view to informing the exploration of specific, democracy promotion activities. Firstly however, the broad context of globalization is summarised before a more detailed investigation of the three main types of paradiplomacy.

2.3.1 Globalization

Increasing global interdependence between actors and policy communities is often cited as an explanation for sub-states to engage internationally. Rosenau's (1990) framework of a multi-centric global system and/or Keohane and Nye's (1974; 1977; 2001) theories of increasing interdependence are common theoretical reference points, forming a general theoretical background as to why sub-states "go abroad" in the post-Cold War world. The growing interdependence of the foreign and domestic policy environments are thought to place pressures and motivate sub-states to engage

internationally in order to service their interests. Global standards in education for example, become domestic policy priorities for local education departments.

More particularly, it can be seen as a manifestation of a world politics in which accepted hierarchies of political activity which have been regarded as separating the international level from the national and subnational, have been replaced by an intermeshing of all levels in an increasingly unpredictable fashion (Hocking, 1993: 29).

Similarly, Keating argues that the restructuring of territorial politics, the globalization of economic, cultural, and political affairs, and the decline of the state's capacity for territorial management are key factors explaining how, when, and why sub-states have taken it upon themselves to "go abroad" (Keating, 1999: 1-3). Others also point to the decline of a bipolar world, dominated by the 'high' politics of security since the end of the Cold War as contributory factors. Traditional international agendas of significance such as military security have declined while other areas such as the economy, educational cooperation, and sustainable development – areas where sub-states wield legislative and administrative competence and responsibility – have become pressing international issues. Sub-states are pressured and motivated to act in pursuit of their own interests internationally in areas where they hold competence. For paradiplomacy scholars like Hocking, this makes them purposive actors, pursuing their regional policy goals in an international setting. However, doing so simultaneously opens their governance structures to influence from the global pressures (Hocking, 1999: 22).

2.3.2 Sub-states as international actors; strategies for engaging internationally

The strategies sub-states employ to engage internationally can be varied, and they have displayed an ability to engage in both a state-like, and non-state-like manner. In this sense, sub-states are particularly well placed to engage internationally in pursuit of their interests and objectives within the various fields of competence.

...the real competitive advantage that NCGs located in federal or quasi-federal states enjoy in the arenas of world politics is rooted in "status ambiguity" reflecting their qualities as both "sovereignty-bound" and "sovereignty-free" actors (Hocking, 1999: 28).

On the one hand they enjoy as actors, structured channels of access to the national policy-making machinery – privileged access which other non-governmental bodies are

denied – where they may promote particular interests in the formulation of national policy. Concurrently, if state structures such as intergovernmental relations do not suffice they may ‘employ modes of behaviour unavailable to national governments’ (Hocking, 1999: 28).

The latter, *primary strategies* (Hocking, 1999: 30), are of particular interest to this project as they concern instances when the sub-state mobilizes its own resources. This may involve state-like activities such as the signing of treaties and establishment of bilateral or multilateral relationships. But it can also involve non-state-like activities. Ontario for example appeared in US courts over “acid rain” disputes promoting their own interests – something the Canadian national government could not do (Hocking, 1993: 57). Meanwhile, the non-sovereignty status of another Canadian province allowed it to adopt the methods of a non-governmental actor to promote its interests;

More focused political campaigns seek to influence public or elite opinion in key foreign countries. In the summer of 1997 British Columbia aired radio commercials in Washington State, giving its side of the fisheries dispute (Keating, 1999: 6).

Sub states have the capacity to act, and to act differently to other actors – appearing state-like and non-state-like. The next sections explore specific types of paradiplomacy, and related strategies and activities, emphasizing that political paradiplomacy is the most likely to involve the promotion of democracy.

2.4 Economic paradiplomacy

California is so big, and its problems so immense, that it needs its own foreign policy. In an era when economics commands foreign relations, this does not mean embassies and armies, but it does mean more trade offices and state agents in foreign countries, its own relations with foreign nations and a governor and legislature willing to represent the state’s interest independently of Washington. California is a distinct region within the United States and needs greater freedom to act on its own – not to thrive, but as this devastating recession has shown, just to survive (Goldsborough, 1993: 89).

James Goldsborough’s claim over two decades ago illustrates the perceived notion that the US federal government cannot adequately address and promote the economic policy priorities even of a state with a GDP approaching \$2 Trillion. Indeed there is broad

agreement within the literature that much of the paradiplomacy of sub-states involves the pursuit of economic objectives, and that economic activities are the starting point and the backbone of the phenomenon (Keating, 1999; Lecours, 2008; Lachapelle and Paquin, 2005; Kincaid, 1999; 2010; Hocking, 1993; 1999; Michelmann, 2007; 2009).

Free-trade agreements and zones have led to the de-nationalization of economies, giving the region a legitimate and central role in the global economy (Lecours, 2002: 99). Michelmann builds the case that economic factors motivate sub-states to engage internationally;

...their governments are often not certain that their interests are given as much attention by their federal governments as they think they deserve, an attitude particularly prevalent in the United States (Michelmann, 2009: 348).

Furthermore, there is perceived to be domestic pressure upon the executives to engage internationally to promote the interests of local companies. 'Small and medium-sized businesses are keenly interested in sub-state policies that support the acquisition of new market shares and the advancement of exports' (Lachapelle and Paquin, 2005: 79). The link between economic performance and winning elections has also long been claimed as a potential motivation for individual politicians to develop economic paradiplomacy;

Through successes in the areas of reverse direct investment, trade, and tourism, subnational units can create new jobs, diversify their economic bases, and expand tax revenues, all of which should boost the electoral fortunes of government leaders (Fry, 1988: 57).

Sub-states and their governing agents can therefore be seen to be pulled by the global economy as well as pushed by regional forces into economic paradiplomacy. This economic paradiplomacy is most prevalent amongst Western sub-states most integrated into the global economy; '...the extensiveness and intensity of these activities are directly related in most instances to the constituent units' level of economic development' (Michelmann: 2009: 347).

To meet these twin pressures, Keating argues that some sub-states have created a;

...distinct model of development based on close linkages between government and private business... this neo-corporatist strategy is

underpinned by a shared culture and identity and a political project aimed at securing effective functional autonomy for the region, by securing effective control of both the political and economic leavers (Keating, 1999: 4).

This strategy of 'insertion' is at least in part driven by an economic desire to maximise the benefits of independent activity within the international world. However, as Keating suggests, political motivations and benefits can, and are attached in certain cases, and economic paradiplomacy can develop into broader activities.

While the aim is a depoliticized and functional engagement with the global economy to benefit the territory, engaging internationally can also lead to further entanglement as a consequence. Involvement with the European market for example, necessitates an adherence to a continental system for the implementation of standards and rights for products and workforces, and scientific or educational cooperation is then a logical step to take.

2.4.1 How?

In engaging internationally, the sub-states develop their resources and capacity to pursue their interests. Embassies and trade offices are set-up around the world, specialist staff are appointed, and an increasing number of transnational networks and organizations are joined, followed, and engaged with. Concurrently, sub-state government departments are sometimes established, and officials allocated to co-ordinate the activities and implement increasingly numerous and detailed strategies as bureaucracies are, in Criekemans' opinion, 'verticalized' (2010b: 44).

There is little if any objection by central governments to the economic paradiplomacy that sub-states engage in, and their authority and autonomy to act comes from this acceptance by the central states. Economic paradiplomacy even predates the decentralization of executive functions in some cases such as Wales (see Royles, 2010), suggesting that the decentralization of economic governance is more legitimate, or at least more acceptable to central government than political and executive devolution.

Pursuing economic interests, promoting trade and investment in particular, are the driving forces behind sub-state international activities in the last 30 years; to mobilise the governance and executive structures of the sub-state. To do so however, can push its

involvement beyond the functional and the de-politicized. The spill-over from economic involvement is unavoidable, even sought after by sub-states seeking to craft a political message onto its sub-state's involvement.

2.5 Co-operational Paradiplomacy

The second layer of paradiplomacy refers to activities that go beyond the economic sphere, involving activities in a range of fields (Lecours, 2008: 3), loosely termed “co-operational paradiplomacy” here to emphasize the cross-border partnerships and mutual gain involved. Motivations can be functional, to engage with and learn from policy fora, or cultural, to collaborate on linguistic or educational projects for mutual gain (Keating, 1999: 3-60). Mainly involving cultural, educational, technical, or technological cooperation, this form ‘...is more extensive and more multidimensional insofar as it is not simply focused in economic gain’ (Lecours, 2008: 3). Expanding the involvement beyond the purely economic field allows the sub-state to pursue its interests within particular policy fields and to influence the economic or other agendas that impact upon their domestic governance responsibilities. It may be the case that the sub-state wishes to engage in a cultural or educational exchange or co-operation with a partner, remain informed about developments at various international policy fora, or to engage in bilateral action as part of a network or group of actors.

Co-operational paradiplomacy involves a particularly broad range of activities that are mutually beneficial to the sub-state and other partner(s) in the relationship. Educational, scientific, and cultural partnerships or exchanges are further areas of common activities (Keating, 1999: 3-6). Such activity can be designed for mutual benefit and to add value, or is developed out of necessity; what Kuznetsov (2015: 110) has referred to as cross-border housekeeping. US states for example, are increasingly drawn to international co-operation with Mexican provinces on border issues (Kincaid, 1999: 130). Alignment to networks, organizations, and their norms and activities it is argued, can offer a means of developing the international personality of sub-states as well as enabling access to globalized policy communities. It is an important feature, relevant to this project, in that democracy promotion and international development, as discussed in chapter 1, are fields dominated by global policy communities and discourses.

2.5.1 How?

Constitutional settlements sometimes empower sub-states with the capacity for bilateral cooperation by bestowing upon them the competence for drawing up exclusive bilateral treaties. The treaties solidify the relationship and commit the signatories to action. Mixed treaties are also witnessed between the sub-state, the federal or central government and a third party (see Lecours, 2008: 3).

However, the constitutional set-up is not always 'able to capture the reality and relevance of the foreign relations of subnational governments. Many activities abroad are taking place despite or below/ besides the constitutional rules' (Blatter, Kreutzer, Rentsch, and Thiele, 2008: 466). Alternative methods of bilateral or multilateral cooperation are also open to sub-states. Cooperation agreements; transnational non-legally binding contracts; Memorandums of Understanding; and cultural agreements or partnerships have been used. Wales for example has signed a host of cooperation, economic and cultural agreements and with foreign states and sub-states despite having very little formal competence in international affairs (Royles, 2010: 152).

Other common tools include the securing of permanent representation and a regular co-operational relationship with partners internationally rather than "one-off" activities. Sometimes such representations are alongside, and in cooperation with broader national institutions, as is the case with the Welsh Government's with the British Council (Royles, 2010: 148). At times the representation is multilateral with sub-states of the same nation cooperating and using the same embassies as with Flanders (Berghe, Van Alstein and Neeb, 2004).

2.5.2 Networks, organizations, and building an international profile

Sub-states also engage with international organizations, transnational networks, and global agendas. They do so either in order to multiply their impact on the global stage or simply in order to benefit from the learning opportunities. Some have suggested that the motives behind such engagement ranging from economic incentives and political convictions, to an almost psychological desire to be 'part of the group' (Cornago, 2010a: 7). Sub-state governments have showed a desire to be aligned ideationally to

transnational networks, international organizations, and their projects and activities, particularly when involving themselves in more altruistic activities;

...what has been called by specialists peer pressure or less technically “metooism”, that is, the inclination to emulate what other federated entities do in the same field...But in addition, a genuine concern for social justice and international solidarity can also be, at least in some cases, a motivation for development cooperation initiatives (Cornago, 2010a: 6).

Lecours goes further, and recognizes the multiplier effect of alignment to transnational networks and the manner in which involvement and membership helps construct the international personality of the sub-state;

The potential of la Francophonie to further build the international profile of these governments is considerable since it is re-defining its role to include a political-diplomatic and commercial dimension in addition to its traditional cultural objectives. In other words, the benefits for Belgian sub-national units of belonging to la Francophonie with respect to their international personalities will increase as members (including these regional governments themselves) broaden the scope of the organization and make it more prominent in world politics (Lecours, 2002: 100).

Criekemans also notes that sub-states seek to gain a degree of international recognition through co-operational activities;

...acting multilaterally can also be seen as an opportunity to further develop the international recognition of Flanders... It is the hope of the Flemish Government that this would –in the long run– contribute to Flanders obtaining a certain degree of recognition and authority within the ‘multilateral community’ (Criekemans, 2006: 16).

Membership however is not a priority, or even a precondition for sub-states that seek alignment with global networks and organizations. Sub-states may simply declare adherence to, and adjust policy in line with the goals, norms, and practices (see Cornago, 2010a : 8-9). By the late 1990s, there were over 115 independent regional “embassies” in Brussels lobbying the European Commission and networking with each other and the emerging European policy communities (Keating, 1999: 6). At this point however, we may note the overlap with political motivations regarding the building of an international profile, and attempts to construct particular notions of the sub-state’s international profile. More generally however, co-operational paradiplomacy more is a broad area of activities, pursued through various means for the benefit of the sub-state.

2.6 Political Paradiplomacy

The final type is political paradiplomacy, which is deliberately distinguished from economic or co-operational activities and differs from Lecours' (2008) notion. Lecours refers to the political dimensions of paradiplomatic activities, and where international relations are developed in order to '...affirm the cultural distinctiveness, political autonomy and the national character of the community they represent' (Lecours, 2008: 3). Such notions are discussed in the next section and incorporated into the analytical framework, but omitted from this project's notion or "political paradiplomacy" which is instead defined as deliberate interventions by sub-states to affect socio-political change within a partner or target. This type of political paradiplomacy is most likely to be associated with democracy promotion.

Engagement with global political agendas such as international development or democracy promotion explicitly for example, can be considered "political" paradiplomatic activities. As Cornago notes for example;

[Sub-states] are particularly prominent in some clearly functional fields, such as economic cooperation, environmental issues, science and technology, transportation and basic infrastructure, but they are also becoming more and more relevant in areas of normative concern such as ethnic conflict, public health and education, cultural diversity, human security, humanitarian relief or development aid (Cornago, 2010a: 28).

In a report for the European Union-Latin American Observatory on Local Decentralised Co-operation for example, five broad areas were identified within which paradiplomacy occurs between European and Latin American sub-states. Humanitarian aid and assistance; support for the different local public policies and strengthening of institutions; economic development and promotion of activities within a territory; political pressure to modify general conditions in the exercise of local power; and cultural change and relationships with citizens (Malé, 2008: 22). The OECD/DAC (2009) has also recognized the growing involvement of sub-state in international development, with the Basque Country, Catalonia, Belgian regions, and German Lander all developing extensive and strategic approaches to international development (see also Cornago, 2010a: 33). Sub-states clearly engage in such political activities.

Indeed, several authors have discussed similar political activities, what this particular project would recognize as democracy promotion activities, though not in the same theoretical or conceptual context as the IR discussion (see Berghe, Alstein and Neeb, 2004; Cornago, 2010a; Jeffrey, 2010; Kincaid, 1999; Owen, 2010; Royles, 2010). Ultimately these activities can be distinguished from co-operational activities as they seek to affect socio political change in other countries. They are also more likely to challenge or clash with the central state's foreign policy.

2.6.1 How?

The basis for engaging in such activities can derive from a constitutional competence or less formal arrangements, as with paradiplomacy more generally. While Flanders' competence and budget for international development has been constitutionally allocated for example, Wales' international development is based on legal loopholes and facilitating IGR (Wyn Jones and Royles, 2012).

Political paradiplomacy is defined through the activity, where sub-states engage in political activities that seek to affect change elsewhere. It is within this field that we encounter the real possibility for sub-state democracy promotion; through international development partnerships, or broader governance and democracy assistance activities. To what extent such activities are acceptable to central governments however, remains to be explored.

2.7 Further aspects of Paradiplomacy

There are three further aspects worthy of examination with regard to such sub-state activities that may offer insight and context to this project's empirical explorations. Taking account of these aspects may assist in developing an answer to the second research question, and further enrich the attempt to better understand sub-state democracy promotion. Firstly, the impact of nationalist parties and territorial politics is purported by scholars to be an influential factor that "pushes" the sub-state to engage in more, and more varied paradiplomacy. Secondly, sub-states appear to be able to bypass the sometimes obstructive political contexts that face other international actors. Thirdly, engagement in political activities occasionally involves co-operation or

association with transnational networks or international organizations such as the UN. Finally, in co-operating and associating with the networks, organizations, and associated global discourses, the issue of the transnational communication of ideas, norms, and practices emerges as an important theme to consider.

2.7.1 Nationalism and territorial politics

Ivo Duchacek (1986: 248), one of the first to write on paradiplomacy was quick to note the often separatist message grafted onto paradiplomacy activities by sub-state governments. Several authors have since commented on the political motivations that drive attempts at expanding paradiplomatic capacity and activity (Keating, 1999: 3-6). Some argue that for nationalist parties, paradiplomacy is of particular benefit. Lecours and Moreno's theory for example is that nationalism – in the context of globalization, a qualitatively different phenomenon to the previous territorially constrained concept – is 'the single most important variable conditioning paradiplomacy' (Lecours and Moreno, 2003: 273). They argue that nationalist parties in government can intervene at every level of sub-state interaction to influence and condition the paradiplomatic activities of sub-states.

Noting that 'nationalism logically leads regional governments to seek international agency' (Lecours and Moreno, 2003: 268), these scholars claim that international activities contribute to the pursuit of core nationalist objectives, namely the construction and consolidation of a distinctive identity as an international actor; defining and articulating a national interest; and potentially achieving a degree of political-territorial mobilization. Lecours (2008: 3) has elaborated on these initial propositions, suggesting in a later text that the character of politically driven paradiplomacy (his "political paradiplomacy" category) differs from other forms;

Here, sub-state governments seek to develop a set of international relations that will affirm the cultural distinctiveness, political autonomy and the national character of the community they represent.

Other commentators have since supported the importance attributed to nationalism and noted the role paradiplomacy can play in furthering nationalist objectives.

Jordi Pujol does well at this game. The international strategies of the President of Catalonia are rooted in a public relations policy in which the President alone embodies the entire Catalan nation. With such international prestige, Jordi Pujol is in a strong bargaining position when the time comes to negotiate with the central authority (Lachapelle and Paquin, 2005: 84).

Paquin (2004) also argues that paradiplomacy, when engaged in by sub-state nationalist governments, can become a means of contesting the central state's monopoly on foreign policy. This form of 'identitary paradiplomacy' is noted in Catalonia, the Basque Country, Quebec, where sub-state nationalist governments have enthusiastically developed the paradiplomacy activity and capacity of their sub-states. Keating meanwhile (2001: 38-40), argues that the new global order and the blurring of sovereignty, gives a space for sub-state or minority nationalist movements to play out, for nation-building programmes to be pursued without confrontation or conflict with the central state.

The idea is that the state system is now so penetrable, and the opportunities within continental regimes and the global trading order so great, that nation-building can proceed without the necessity to declare formal independence (Keating, 2001: 38-39).

Keating (1997: 702) has also claimed that paradiplomacy '...legitimizes nation-building and helps consolidate it at home by placing the minority nation in the wider family of nation-states'. This latter claim hints at the notion that paradiplomacy is a means of defining through activity, to a domestic audience, what the nation is and does, its character and actorness.

Nationalist governments also seek to develop paradiplomacy further where possible, because of the spin-off benefits. Lachapelle and Paquin note that nationalism is a common factor with many of the most prominent paradiplomatic actors;

...no doubt one of the most significant variables, yet it remains one of the most neglected in relation to the study of paradiplomacy...The most active sub-state powers in the field of international relations (Flanders, Walloonie, Quebec, Catalonia, the Basque Homeland) all share a single attribute: nationalism (2005, 82).

Indeed, it is where nationalist parties are strong that paradiplomacy tends to be most advanced and developed, and where it may arguably be expected to find more political

activities such as promoting democracy or supporting international development. Alexander Kuznetsov's recent contribution to the field also echoes the views of his predecessors regarding the centrality of nationalism to political paradiplomacy. For him, key practitioners of political paradiplomacy;

...includes secessionist regions with the intention to gain their own statehood or at least a high autonomous status. For instance, mostly all subnational entities with the status of non-recognized states (Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, etc.) have a strong political message in their external activities (Kuznetsov, 2015: 110).

The presence of nationalist parties in government is considered a key factor of political paradiplomacy, and the literature clearly points to a greater likelihood of international projection in cases where there is a distinct national identity or ethno-nationalist characteristics. It could be understood as a key variable that is theorised to hold a recognisable relationship with the nature of a sub-state's paradiplomacy. The presence of nationalist parties must therefore be a key consideration when attempting to understand sub-state involvement in political agendas such as democracy promotion.

2.7.2 Bypassing difficult political contexts

Sub-states, when engaging in paradiplomacy, have shown themselves capable of innovative progress in areas where more established actors have found the inter-state political context restrictive. A broader review of the literature reveals that sub-states have found themselves capable of overcoming difficulties faced by other actors.

The federal governments of Canada and the US for example, pressured by domestic interests, stalled progress on a worldwide binding agreement for limiting greenhouse gasses at the Copenhagen Summit in 2009. However the sub-state network, New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers, implemented 'one of the most ambitious climate change action plans and is still at the forefront of global warming issues' (Chaloux and Paquin, 2012: 218). The participating constituent governments, with a history of working together on issues such as acid rain and mercury pollution, were able to develop collective mechanisms to combat global warming (see Chaloux and Paquin, 2012: 229). The approach went further than the inter-state treaties of Copenhagen or Kyoto could hope to, and suggests that the freedom from broader

domestic and international political contexts can at times allow sub-states to collectively develop innovative responses to difficult challenges. The authors go further;

Furthermore, reduction targets and measures adopted by the premiers and governors influenced the other states and provinces, and subsequently, many of them developed action plans with similar goals, sometimes even going further than the original plan and thus creating a race to the top (Chaloux and Paquin, 2012: 232).

Sub-states may in fact develop practices and approaches to global issues when it may be difficult or impossible for more politically entangled states to do so. Alongside earlier assertions regarding the suitability of sub-states as democracy promoters, this is of particular interest with regard to the difficulties facing established democracy promoters and the “backlash” examined in Chapter 1.

2.7.3 ‘Transnational Communication’

The issue of international influence or the process of transnational communication refers to the exchange and adoption of knowledge, norms, and practices from international partners. A previous section identified international organizations and networks’ important role in influencing sub-state motivations and activities. The concept of transnational communication may consequently be of particular interest to this project in two respects.

Firstly, the rise to prominence of international agendas such as sustainable development or international development, is claimed as a trigger for some sub-states such as Flanders to develop their own responses (Bachus and Spillemaeckers, 2012: 53). ‘While the impact in the Flemish case was mostly from global developments, other cases are influenced more by the EU’, such as the Basque Country or the German Bundesländer (Happaerts, Bruyninckx and Vand den Brande, 2012: 245). Global political contexts and discourses are argued to compel sub-states to act within a particular field. This is not to discount or contrast the belief that nationalist parties are key factors pushing the sub-state into paradiplomatic activity, but that there is an additional, “pull” factor from outside the sub-state.

The second point of interest in relation to transnational communication concerns the adoption of goals, norms, and even the formation of policy and practices in line with

those of the international organization or global “industry” in question. Holzinger, Knill and Sommerer (2008) who, in exploring state-level environmental policy convergence, point to the notion of ‘transnational communication’ as a factor which encourages convergence and homogenisation of policy and conceptual understandings; ‘...frequently interacting organizations (such as national bureaucracies) tend to develop similar structures and concepts over time’ which is achieved through ‘...mechanisms including emulation, lesson-drawing, and transnational epistemic communities’ (Holzinger, Knill and Sommerer, 2008: 558 – 559).

Their paper, they argue, has shown;

...that increasing international interlinkage has driven environmental policies of industrialized countries toward greater similarity, comprehensiveness, and strictness (Holzinger, Knill and Sommerer, 2008: 584).

Audet and Gendron (2012) take the concept to sub-state governments and conclude that in understanding sustainable development;

Social and political construction of sustainable development by subnational governments is thus often embedded in global discourses and practices about sustainability (Audet and Gendron, 2012: 39).

Some are more specific in relation to policy;

At the level of the policy framing and the basic definition of sustainable development (and in some cases the sustainable development principles), all subnational governments were influenced by the Brundtland Report and the outcome documents of Rio (Happaerts, Bruyninckx and Vand den Brande, 2012: 245).

Others have also noted the impact of supranational dynamics not only on the understandings of sustainable development but also on the actions taken;

Basque Policies are recipients of the international diffusion of concepts, general arguments and mechanisms for action, which in the final analysis have altered the construction and definition of the problem of sustainable development (de la Pena Varona and Hinojal, 2012: 80).

The notion of ‘transnational communication’ enriches the analysis of sub-state engagement with globalized agendas. These are important considerations when

exploring the democracy promotion and international development of sub-states and attempting to explain how and why they engage in such activities.

In summation, exploring sub-state involvement in globalized agendas such as democracy promotion or international development, awareness must be kept of the key influencing role played by nationalist parties. Sub-states' potential to develop innovative responses to transnational challenges which may have alluded states and other international actors also hold potentially relevant considerations with regard to the "backlash" explored in chapter 1. Consequently, an exploration of sub-states as democracy promoters may produce insight into innovative techniques which may be of value to the democracy promotion policy community. Furthermore, there is a clear indication that transnational networks, international organizations, and globalized policy discourses are a major influence upon sub-state motivations and methods in the same fields, and merit further investigation and particular attention in this project.

The final section of this chapter will turn to paradiplomacy theory and the attempts to construct a framework for understanding how and why sub-states engage in international activities.

2.8 Paradiplomacy theory

The various types of paradiplomacy have been explored, and valuable insights drawn from the literature as to the strategies and motivations of paradiplomacy that help ensure that this project's understanding of sub-state democracy promotion relates to the existing scholarship. Nonetheless, the first, but in particular the second research question, of how to better understand sub-state democracy promotion, remain outstanding. The project still requires an analytical framework, and a means by which sub-state democracy promotion can be understood, while still remaining relevant to the two literatures covered in this, and the previous chapter. The following section again turns to the sub-state literature, this time to explore their attempts at theorising and explaining paradiplomacy.

2.8.1 Early paradiplomacy scholarship

The term paradiplomacy can be traced to Soldatos (1990¹) and Duchacek (1984; 1986; 1990), who first looked at the diplomatic activity of subnational units. The term was an abbreviation of 'parallel diplomacy' and though accepted by many, was also rejected due to the implication that the activities did not run contrary to states'. Duchacek (1990) for example noted the variation in form and intensity of the activities which also ran contrary to the state's policies at times. Like Soldatos, Duchacek attempted to develop an analytical concept to meet the growing involvement of sub-states in international affairs. He moved away from Soldatos' early, 'parallel', depiction suggesting that paradiplomacy may at times conflict with the central state and involve activities that 'graft a more or less separatist message onto its economic, social and cultural links with foreign nations' (Duchacek, 1986: 248).

Building on his broader notion of paradiplomacy, he identified four categories of foreign action engaged in by non-central governments; cross-boundary (often co-operational and highly functional in nature); trans regional (contacts between NCGs² which do not border each other); 'global paradiplomacy' (direct and deliberate relationships between the NCGs of separate states or between one NCG and private actors outside its territorial boundaries); and finally 'protodiplomacy' (activity engaged in preparation for separation or independence from the central state) (Duchacek 1986: 240). This typology is refined further in a later text, noting the variation and overwhelmingly economic or technical nature of NCGs paradiplomacy (Duchacek, 1990).

Duchacek limits himself however to sub-states and dealings with other states and NCGs. Furthermore, there have, since these publications, been several notable developments with relation to this project. Perhaps for example, there is one possible addition to his typology; that of NCG involvement within transnational networks and organizations such as the Francophonie, the WTO, the EU or the OECD. Despite raising awareness of NCG international relations and its nature, Duchacek is sadly limited and dated in any attempt at explaining the form that the paradiplomacy of sub-states takes.

¹ Though published in 1990, the chapter of the same name is based upon a paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington DC in 1986 which influenced Duchacek's work (see Aguirre, 1999: 186).

² Duchacek uses the term non-central governments (NCGs) rather than sub-states.

Soldatos' (1990) later contribution which agrees with Duchacek's potentially contradictory nature of paradiplomacy offers a list of determinant conditions. Both domestic and external factors are cited as key variables, important insights which would be echoed by later scholars. However the attempt falls short of "explaining" the activities as such. It doesn't provide a generalizable theory, and leaves several factors rather unexplored. The contribution and 'personality of leaders', 'historical and cultural ingredients', 'socio-political climate' 'important geographic position and resources' (Soldatos, 1990: 51), are all mentioned as further possible factors affecting the form paradiplomacy takes without being incorporated into the theoretical framework for explaining paradiplomacy. There is little detail regarding how important they are as factors, and how they impact upon what the sub-state does, and how their structuring relationship with the sub-state's agency can be analysed. The chapter also suffers from the experience of the following decades which saw the instances and types of paradiplomacy being witnessed expand. Nonetheless, the research suggests that several factors, both internal and external, structure the ability of sub-states to engage in paradiplomacy.

Others have attempted to expand the types of actors and activities involved with paradiplomacy during this early phase. James Der Derian (1987), possibly the closest to an international relations paradigm to approach the topic in its infancy, sees paradiplomacy as non-governmental in nature. It involves celebrities like Bob Geldof or leaders of civil society groups such as Jessie Jackson and the Pope using 'media-diplomacy' to communicate ideas and values when 'techno-diplomacy' has failed states (Der Derian, 1987: 202-203). Der Derian's aim however is to deconstruct diplomacy while simultaneously developing or reconstructing more useful paradigms of diplomacy (1987: 5). The discussion of the term opened the possibilities and acknowledged the potential extent of sub-state (and non-state) diplomacy beyond state-like behaviour, however any contribution to explaining paradiplomacy as a set of actions proved ultimately unfruitful. In Aguirre's view (1999: 202);

Though offering new and interesting insights about marginal and, sometimes, abnormal forms of late twentieth century "diplomacy", this postmodernist discourse was unable to focus on the main target of the

enquiry: the contemporary nature and meaning of the NCG international involvement, as such.

Beyond these attempts, what we receive from the early paradiplomacy literature is rather descriptive. This is by no means useless; indeed we have, due to Duchacek and his contemporaries, a firmer notion of what paradiplomacy looks like, what strategies and motivations are involved. The study of paradiplomacy continued however, with a growing focus on empirical studies, accounting for the changes, but also converging on key variables.

2.8.2 Convergence upon key variables in recent literature

Blatter et al. (2008) claim that the more recent case-study heavy literature on paradiplomacy lacks either any, or at least a consistent theoretical framework. Lecours also suggests that;

...this literature suffers from two major weaknesses: the first, and most important, is the absence of a general theoretical perspective that can explain how regional governments have acquired international agency, and what shapes their foreign policy, international relations, and negotiating behaviour; the second is a lack of focus on constructing general analytical frameworks that can guide the study of paradiplomacy (Lecours, 2002: 92).

While the review of the paradiplomacy literature to this point has assisted in the contextualization of any empirical findings the project may make, it has still not provided an analytical framework, and a means by which the second research question may be answered, and sub-state democracy promotion understood.

One reason for an absence of focus on building theory might be that much of the already limited literature on sub-state international activities has been presented and framed as supporting arguments of broader theories. Hocking (1993) and Der Derian (1987) for example, use paradiplomacy to challenge conventional understandings of diplomacy. Kuznetsov meanwhile notes that there may be as many as eleven dimensions to the paradiplomacy scholarship, each focussing on different but specific variables or factors (Kuznetsov, 2015: Chapter 4). With so many alternative approaches to studying paradiplomacy, a consistent analytical framework might be an unrealistic expectation.

Hocking argues that we have moved into a 'postdiplomatic' age 'beyond diplomacy', a complexity which raises in Hocking's opinion, a key problem for any attempt to develop a theoretical framework for explaining sub-state international activity;

Generalizations concerning NCG international activities and interests have been shown to be unsustainable. Not only is this because each federal system is unique – which clearly it is – but also because, within federal states, NCGs demonstrate differing characteristics and resources (Hocking, 1993: 199).

For Hocking we must move away from the state/non-state paradigm in order to explain and incorporate the activities of sub-states. His work is concerned with the “processes which are rendering the boundaries demarcating state and non-state actors far more permeable” (Hocking, 1993: 199), and wishes to develop an understanding of states and sub-states (for him, NCGs) alongside each other. If anything, he suggests a move away from treating sub-states and states as distinct unitary international actors, as this would emphasize conflict between them and central governments, which is for him is an exception to the observed relationship and an obfuscation of the hybrid nature of NCGs (Hocking, 1993: 199). For him, sub-states and states are to be understood alongside each other.

However he does concede that certain elements condition NCG international activity in the event of NCGs finding their interests at variance with those of the central government. These are important insights and they can be understood as the key variables regarding how and why sub-states engage in international activities;

These include the basic constitutional arrangements of a given political system and the opportunities that they provide for international activities; bureaucratic and political attitudes at the centre, the local resources available to sustain an international strategy and, by no means an inconsiderable factor, the degree of interest possessed by international actors in the affairs of a constituent unit in a federation (Hocking, 1993: 200).

In a later text, Hocking suggests that these multi-level factors which seem to condition and explain the form sub-state international activity takes are interlinked; “The motivations for specific modes of NCG international activity needs to relate domestic to international forces and the interactions between the two” (Hocking, 1999: 22). In this

respect, even Hocking concedes to a multi-level structuring of opportunities for sub-states to engage in paradiplomacy.

Soldatos (1990) and Daniel Latouche (1988) also tentatively point to similarly multi-level explanatory factors when attempting to offer a more nuanced method of studying subnational foreign policy;

To make sense of the foreign initiatives of subnational actors...we should realize that we are operating at the margin of both the domestic and the international spheres, a location where what is “inside” and what is “outside” becomes difficult to assess.

To understand Quebec’s foreign policy, we must take into account not only the internal articulation of its own state-building process (and the specific configuration of forces which gives it life) but also its position within the overall Canadian statist space. We must consider Quebec’s federal and regional components, the place of Canada within the international system, and the evolving nature of this system (Latouche, 1988: 34)

Hans Michelmann also highlights very similar multi-level factors which for him explain the foreign relations of federated entities. For Michelmann the constitutional definition and allocation of competences; the intergovernmental relations; the capacity and willingness to be involved internationally at the regional level; the political context regionally and state-wide; and the opportunities presented by the EU and transnational networks are all highlighted as key structural factors conditioning the sub-state’s capacity to engage internationally (Michelmann, 2007: 4-7). Keating also (1999: 6-10) emphasizes the reliance of sub-states on structured opportunities to engage in paradiplomacy.

There is a convergence by scholars around a range of variables present at several levels that must be considered alongside any understanding of the international agency of sub-states. The domestic level in particular, the constitutional make-up, nature of the intergovernmental relations, are seen to structure the sub-state’s ability to engage in paradiplomacy (see Duchacek 1984; 1990; Hocking 1993; Kuznetsov 2015: 52; Soldatos 1990; Requejo 2010). But, as noted in a previous section, a range of authors also point to the impact of nationalist parties (see Kuznetsov, 2015: 110; Lecours and Moreno, 2003; Lachapelle and Paquin, 2005: 82-85; Paquin, 2004), and others to external factors

such as the EU and transnational networks (see Cornago, 2010a; Criekemans, 2006; Lecours, 2002).

For some, the multiplicity of factors at various levels obstructs the capacity to build theory, but for others they are the basis of an analytical framework. Hocking for example, sees the role of and relationship with the central government – the hybrid nature of NCGs as “a part” of and “apart” from the state – and the complex mix of variables that may condition sub-state international activities as limits to the potential for building a generalizable understanding of sub-states as unitary or independent actors.

Lecours (2002) however, suggests that the range of variables can be understood as factors to be incorporated into a broader framework to understand and explain the international activity of sub-states. In short, rather than see the complexity of factors and relations at multiple levels that condition the international activity of sub-state as a barrier, Lecours suggests it may be the very means by which we may explain that activity; if they can be mapped and analysed adequately.

2.9 The Lecourian Framework

Lecours, like other paradiplomacy scholars, concedes that both internal and external factors condition the manner in which sub-states may act internationally, but that they also ‘increasingly present opportunities for action’ (2002: 96). Lecours echoes the paradiplomacy literature discussed earlier by emphasizing the domestic roots of paradiplomacy in particular, given that so much of what sub-states can do is dependent upon and structured by the constitution, the capacity, the political context and role of nationalist parties, and other domestic factors and institutions.

...the domestic roots of paradiplomacy involve a peculiar structure-agency dynamic featuring national and regional institutional settings creating the very possibility of sub-national units becoming international actors and providing opportunity structures for regional politicians seeking to project their regions onto the international scene (Lecours, 2002: 96).

In being non-states operating in a state-centric international context however, the rules and institutions of the continental and global levels also condition the agency of sub-

states, alongside the domestic, regional and national institutions (2002: 94-96). Sub-states find cracks within the global rules and institutions that allow them to act, particularly as those structures change. But in doing so, the nature of those “cracks” also structures what and how they may engage internationally.

If regional governments, which have lacked the necessary status to be accepted as actors in contemporary world politics, are increasingly acquiring an international presence, it is largely as a consequence of structural changes (Lecours, 2002: 96).

Given that opportunities for paradiplomacy are structured, and must therefore be understood and understood by examining and acknowledging the impact of structural factors at various levels, Lecours argues that a ‘general theoretical approach to paradiplomacy cannot centre exclusively on agency’ (2002: 96). These domestic and external factors that condition activity he terms opportunity structures (Lecours, 2002: 96), echoing the earlier work of Keating (1999) and the broader paradiplomacy literature noted in the previous section. The opportunity structures themselves are institutions – though sometimes loosely defined – located by Lecours at the regional, national, continental, and global levels, and they must be given a central role in any understanding and analytical framework attempting to examine and explain paradiplomacy;

The understanding of the international agency of regions as deriving from opportunity structures, and the subsequent need to address the importance of structures in the domestic context of paradiplomacy, calls for an approach which explicitly gives theoretical importance to political institutions (Lecours, 2002: 97).

They are, for Lecours, the multiple variables present at several levels that must be considered if paradiplomatic activity is to be understood. Importantly however, the opportunity structures themselves do not determine or cause political activity. Rather, there is still a requirement for political forces to take advantage of those opportunities in order to initiate activities. Specifically, the political agency comes in the form of ‘regional politicians seeking to project their regions onto the international scene’ (2002: 96), most commonly through the government of the sub-state. The opportunity structures are key therefore in understanding how, and even why, sub-states engage

internationally. But there is still, in keeping with the majority of paradiplomacy theory, a role also for agency from the sub-state.

Due to the need to adopt an approach that gives theoretical emphasis to opportunity structures, as well the agent-structure dynamic, Lecours suggests that new, and specifically historical institutionalism emerges as a 'great source of theoretical insight' (2002: 97). Historical institutionalism focuses on the role of institutions as key intervening variables conditioning agency. In this case, the role of opportunity structures in conditioning the international agency of sub-states.

Lecours has constructed an analytical framework for examining and explaining paradiplomacy. In mapping the opportunity structures present at various levels with which sub-states engage with, Lecours provides identifiable variables and focal points to examine. The historical institutionalist perspective meanwhile, provides a means of understanding the agent-structure relationship, and the manner in which the opportunity structures condition the agency of the sub-state. It is an analytical framework, a means by which paradiplomacy can be examined and explained while giving due regard to the key factors that are thought to influence sub-state international activity. Such a framework is not without its issues and implicit assumptions, and these are explored in chapter 3. But it is the most advanced analytical framework for understanding paradiplomacy in a manner which supports the broader findings and conclusions of the scholarship, and accounts for the complexity sub-states' international actorness.

2.10 Conclusions

This chapter explored the paradiplomacy scholarship, a literature which is not immediately helpful for our purposes. There is very little engagement with democracy promotion, and the little there is, is not framed in the same context as the IR debate on the same topic or supported by any detailed empirical explorations. In answering the first research question, the problem of understanding sub-state democracy promotion, the paradiplomacy literature has not attempted to understand sub-state democracy promotion. Nor have the possible implications of understanding the activities of sub-states been fully explored. This is not a direct criticism, only to state that the work is yet

to be done, despite some suggestions as to the suitability of sub-states as democracy promoters, and the ongoing struggle of practitioners and IR scholars as they grapple with the 'backlash'.

Nonetheless, there are important insights that will help contextualise and inform the empirical contribution of this project, and aid in the construction of an analytical framework to answer the second question, and better understand sub-state democracy promotion. For this, and more reasons outlined in chapter 3, the project adopts this analytical framework as the basis of a means for understanding sub-state democracy promotion.

Globalization and the post-Cold War security context for example, are important factors that have coincided with a marked proliferation in paradiplomatic activities. Much of this activity has been "located" on the border of the domestic and the international – pursuing the internationalized aspects of their domestic competences. Economic paradiplomacy is "front and centre" for most Western sub-states, involving a depoliticized, and instrumental engagement abroad to promote trade and investment. A second layer of activities make use of further ways in which sub-states can engage, such as the ability to sign treaties. Educational, cultural, and scientific exchanges or partnerships have proliferated as sub-states "hook up" to global policy networks and other international partners. Importantly, the constitutional and legal authority, as well as the sub-state's capacity to engage internationally plays an integral and structuring role, enabling paradiplomacy to be conducted and state-like or non-state-like strategies to be pursued. Political paradiplomacy meanwhile, is distinguished as an activity that seeks to affect socio-political change in another country; the type of paradiplomacy most likely to involve the promotion of democracy.

The role of nationalist parties in developing the paradiplomacy of sub-states is well documented and argued to be a key consideration. The construction and consolidation of a distinctive identity through international activity is also motivation for nationalist parties in government. Indeed, nationalism and the presence of nationalist parties must be a key consideration for this project, viewed as a potentially important variable to explore, if it is to relate to the paradiplomacy literature. Further key considerations

relate to sub-states' potential for bypassing difficult political contexts, and their adoption and alignment to global norms and practices through a process of transnational communication. Consideration of these issues during the empirical investigations will ensure the project relates to the leading paradiplomacy scholarship.

A review of paradiplomacy theory, and attempts to explain activities have concluded that there has been a convergence on various domestic, and external factors that combine to structure paradiplomacy. Andre Lecours' multi-level analytical framework, it is argued in the next chapter, offers the most advanced means of understanding of sub-state international activity. The challenge for the third chapter however will be to ensure that the framework also allows adequate consideration of the themes and key factors associated with democracy promotion, highlighted in chapter 1, and the further issues of transnational communication which emerges as potentially significant with regard to engagement with globalized practices and discourses such as democracy promotion or international development.

Chapter 3: The Analytical Framework

This chapter will detail Lecours' multi-level analytical framework and the modifications made in order to account for specific democracy promotion themes identified in chapter one, and the further factors raised in chapter 2.

It will begin with a discussion and slight modification of Lecours' multi-level framework of opportunity structures. Historical institutionalism will then be presented as the theoretical perspective that will be adopted in order to examine Lecours' framework, and a discussion of the conceptual tools to be operationalized will follow. The chapter will then outline the justification for a comparative approach, and present the three cases selected for this project. Finally, the data sources and research themes will be discussed.

3.1 The multi-level framework of opportunity structures

Lecours' framework is rooted in the belief that; paradiplomacy is a 'phenomenon whose explanation involves considering both internal and external variables' (Lecours, 2002: 110). His framework consequently seeks to map and take account of those variables present at different levels.

Following from institutionalist thought, and mirroring the repeated claims made by paradiplomacy scholars before him, Lecours identifies the institutions that should be considered as key variables in any analysis and explanation of paradiplomatic activity. These institutions or institutional contexts give rise to opportunities for domestic agency – often sub-state politician or governments in this case – to engage in international activities. These institutional contexts are termed 'opportunity structures'. They need not always provide opportunities, and may indeed constrain or restrict opportunities for paradiplomacy. Contained within the 'opportunity structures' however are the key variables that are argued to influence paradiplomacy – how it is conducted, when and even why. Historical institutionalism provides the theoretical tools to investigate the opportunity structures and the associated agent-structure relationship.

Lecours' framework is a theory only of paradiplomacy, and only so far as it claims the opportunity structures to be the key determining factors. There are currently no hypotheses or theories of sub-state democracy promotion specifically to test. The framework therefore is a map of key variables or 'opportunity structures' that require consideration when attempting to understand how, when, and why paradiplomatic activity develops. It is an inductive means of developing explanations, a precursory step to theorising, hypothesizing and further refinement. Only in concluding the thesis and analysing findings from empirical cases therefore, can the thesis begin to offer hypotheses regarding sub-state democracy promotion specifically.

3.1.1 Variables and 'opportunity structures'

Lecours, drawing on the work of other paradiplomacy scholars, identifies ten institutions or institutional contexts that can, but not always, operate so as to give rise to opportunities for agents³ to engage the sub-state in paradiplomatic activity. These potential opportunities he terms 'opportunity structures'.

...the domestic roots of paradiplomacy involve a peculiar structure-agency dynamic featuring national and regional institutional settings creating the very possibility of sub-national units becoming international actors and providing opportunity structures for regional politicians seeking to project their regions onto the international scene

...

However, this salience of domestic variables does not mean that the structures of international politics are irrelevant. On the contrary, the international institutional context is equally as important in turning regions into international agents capable of multilateral negotiation (Lecours, 2002: 96-99).

Lecours outlines how internal and external institutional contexts – the key variables of paradiplomacy – combine to structure paradiplomatic activity. In order to understand how, when, and why paradiplomatic activity develops therefore, the 'opportunity structures' must be the focus of analysis alongside their impact on agency. Contained within the 'opportunity structures', and located on four different levels therefore, are the ten key variables that require consideration with regard to paradiplomacy.

³ For Lecours, and the paradiplomacy scholarship in general (even if somewhat implicitly), the agency comes from regional politicians and sub-state governments.

The first two levels, the regional and national levels, concern the domestic context that structures opportunities for paradiplomacy. These, are, at the first level 1) the capacity and powers of the sub-state to engage abroad, and 2) the local political context. At the second, national level, further variables include 3) the formal division of competence with regard to foreign policy, 4) the intergovernmental relations (IGR), 5) representation at the state level, as well as 6) the state's foreign policy agenda. These opportunity structures contain the domestic variables and institutional settings that structure opportunities for paradiplomatic activity (Lecours, 2002: 96-99).

The continental and global levels meanwhile involve factors beyond the immediate control of either the sub-state or central state, the external variables and institutional settings that work so as to construct opportunities for paradiplomacy. These opportunity structures are identified as 7) other states, sub-states and partners that are prepared to engage bilaterally, 8) continental institutions such as the EU and its committee of the regions, or 9) transnational networks that allow sub-states to become involved. 10) The global economy constitutes the final 'opportunity structure' requiring consideration. It should be noted again however that the framework also gives theoretical space for agency and its interaction with the 'opportunity structures', which is discussed in the relevant section below.

This chapter will begin by examining the opportunity structures at the various levels.

3.1.2 The Regional level

Two variables that require consideration are located at the regional (the sub-state) level; the *political party system* or *domestic political context*, and the *formal powers and institutional capacity of the sub-state*. With regard to the party system, and in keeping with a tranche of paradiplomacy studies, nationalist, regionalist or ethnolinguistic parties are seen as driving forces behind the activities, expansion and continued development of paradiplomatic activity (Lecours, 2002: 101-102). Indeed, paradiplomacy is seen to be most advanced in cases where nationalist parties are strong and their presence identified as a key variable.

The institutional capacity and formal powers possessed by the sub-state meanwhile set very specific boundaries regarding what can or cannot be done. Capacity to engage in international activities is related to the resources available, and the degree to which a government can operationalize and put those resources – essentially expenditure, personnel, and expertise – to work in pursuit of international activities.

3.1.3 The National level

Four aspects of the national level require consideration with regard to paradiplomacy (2002: 102). Firstly, the constitution and its explicit definition of where competence lies for international activity can set clear boundaries for what can or cannot be done without legal ramifications. Ambiguity or a lack of clarity also contributes to the creation of opportunities for international activity (see also; Fry, 1988: 57-58). Education may be defined as a sub-state competence for example, however without reference to where the responsibility lies for transnational educational partnerships, a case may be made in favour or against the sub-state taking a lead in such activities.

In such instances, the second key aspect comes into particular focus; the intergovernmental relations (IGR) between the central state and the sub-state. These relations may be conflicting or cooperative in nature and may have considerable consequences for any disputes over jurisdiction and legislative competence. IGR often define any ambiguities in constitutional competences. Furthermore, they may act as a means of disciplining or establishing informal or semi-legal, but nonetheless “hard” rules surrounding what the sub-state can or cannot do.

Thirdly, but also a further aspect related to IGR, the sub-state’s representation at the central state level with regard to foreign policy may also generate opportunities for international activity. Flemish sub-states for example, lead Belgian delegations on international issues where they have competence. But where there is no representation or input into the state’s foreign policy such as in Canada; ‘regional leaders have no direct influence on foreign policy and may decide to develop their own’ (Lecours, 2002: 102).

The final variable on the national level to consider is the state's foreign policy agenda.
For Lecours;

If a state's foreign policy is heavily geared towards high diplomacy and military issues, the involvement of regional governments is less probable than if it deals with traditional 'low politics' matters such as culture, the environment, the economy, and so on (Lecours, 2002: 102-103).

This latter aspect may be of interest in the case of democracy promotion for if the practice is of particular concern to the central state then we may in Lecours' eyes expect not to find sub-state involvement.

3.1.4 Continental level

Supra-national institutions at the continental level also construct opportunities for paradiplomacy and allow sub-states to bypass the central institutions (Lecours, 2002: 103). Continental institutions act to encourage or allow regions to become internationally active over subjects and policy fields within and even outside their legislative competence (Lecours and Moreno, 2003: 275). Institutions such as the Committee of the Regions within the EU have created opportunities for sub-states to extend their influence beyond national borders. Free-trade areas and other economic institutions meanwhile allow sub-states to

...jump directly into the continental and global economy. In other words, free-trade continental regimes have the immediate consequence of shifting economic power upward, as well as a subsequent one of shifting economic power downward (Lecours, 2002: 103).

3.1.5 Global Level

The global level consists of three variables to consider as opportunity structures. Firstly, other states create opportunities for sub-states to engage internationally, either directly with them, or alongside them. States for example sometimes seek relationships with regions. France looks to develop partnerships with Quebec for example, thus "pulling" sub-states into international and diplomatic activity. Similarly sub-states sometimes target other states or sub-states and develop 'a web of inter-regional relations' which builds up the international agency of regional governments (Lecours, 2002: 104).

Secondly, *international organizations* open several channels for sub-state involvement in their broader projects. Organizations such as the Francophonie or the International Labour Organization (ILO) accept various forms of regional or sub-state membership and open channels for engagement internationally.

Finally the *global economy* and demands of a free-trade agenda across the globe require consideration as a creator of opportunity with its accompanying “upward and downward shifts of economic power” (Lecours, 2002: 104). For Lecours, the region becomes an economic centre and a unit in and of itself with a consequent responsibility falling on the (sub-state) government for economic development and engagement with the global economy. This in turn creates a “demand” for international economic activity (Lecours, 2002: 104).

3.1.6 Adjustments

Chapters 1 and 2 have explored the literature on democracy promotion and paradiplomacy more broadly, highlighting in turn, key themes and factors that must be considered if the study of sub-state democracy promotion is to remain relevant. In answering the second research question, and in attempting to better understand sub-state democracy promotion, it is important for such factors to be incorporated into the analytical framework, in order for the understanding to relate to the broader scholarship.

Within the democracy promotion literature explored in chapter 1, there is an emphasis on a dominant global discourse shared by promoters worldwide. Scholars such as Schraeder (2002: 234) have commented on the establishment of democracy promotion as an international norm by the turn of the 21st Century, while Abrahamsen’s (2000) exposition of a dominant development discourse is a key factor in understanding international development. A normative order, reinforced by powerful discourses and established practices has built up around promoting democracy and international development. Notable also within the sub-state literature examined in chapter 2 meanwhile is the issue of transnational communication of ideas, norms, and even practices. The policies and practices of sub-states are claimed to have been influenced

heavily by global discourses. These notions must therefore be accounted for and examined as part of the empirical explorations of this project.

The Lecours framework does allow a focus upon transnational networks and organizations, but not explicitly for the discourses and norms that transcend those networks and organizations. In addressing this challenge, *global norms* regarding promoting democracy and international development will be considered as an opportunity structure, to be examined like any other, as a structuring factor, conditioning the opportunities for sub-states to engage in democracy promotion.

Locating this institution on the framework proves challenging due to its own multi-level nature. While the norm is constructed and disseminated globally, its salience and understanding can be examined at the global, domestic, and certainly with regard to this project, the regional levels.

The project adopts the an analytical framework that takes account of the complex agent-structure relationship concerning paradiplomacy. Furthermore, in making adjustments, the framework may account for key structuring factors thought to condition democracy promotion, allowing it to relate directly to the broader scholarship concerned with democracy promotion. Consequently, the framework is theoretically in a position to better understand sub-state democracy promotion than the hitherto unconnected scholarship on democracy promotion and paradiplomacy have been.

Table: opportunity structures

Domestic/internal opportunity structures		International/external opportunity structures	
Regional Level	National Level	Continental Level	Global Level
Political system/Domestic political context	party Constitutional definition of competence	Supra-national political and/or economic institutions	International organizations

Formal Powers and institutional capacity	Intergovernmental relations		Other partners and relations with them
	Representation as part of the state foreign policy		Global economy
	Central state's foreign policy		(NEW) Globalized norms and transnational communication

3.2 Historical Institutionalism

An historical institutionalist perspective is integral to the framework, enriching the analysis in two important and relevant ways. Firstly, historical institutionalism also defines institutions and institutional settings as the key variables conditioning political activity. It consequently offers an appropriate means of analysing how the variables in this case – also institutional settings – relate to the paradiplomatic activity in question, in this case the promotion of democracy. Secondly, the perspective offers insight and a means of analysing the complex agent-structure relationship that characterises paradiplomatic activity.. The following section outlines the key concepts related to the perspective, notably its understanding of agency, path dependency, and institutional dynamism. Some background regarding new institutionalism is provided before detailing the specific, historical institutionalist strand adopted in this project.

3.2.1 New Institutionalism

New-institutionalists are “new” inasmuch as they reject “old” institutionalism, largely for viewing it as being overly descriptive to the extent of being parochial (see Macridis, 1955). New institutionalists incorporate a variety of new methods into their work; from the innovative techniques of behaviouralists and constructivists, to the historical method, and formal legal studies. The targets of these new methods are still institutions, albeit with a looser definition. Indeed, new institutionalism is still tied to the same core

belief and key ontological claim that institutions are the key intervening variable in political activity.

In making use of the new techniques however, they have developed more dynamic and sophisticated means of explaining and generating theories regarding why political activity takes the form it does. These explanations are based more on the interplay between institutions and actors and the consequent conditioning or restriction of activity to particular paths.

The institutions in question are defined as 'formal rules, compliance procedures and standard operating practices that structure relationships between individuals in various units of the polity and the economy' (Hall, 1986: 19-20). Peter Hall goes on to claim that new institutionalism can also focus on less formal organisational networks and regulatory practices which condition behaviour in institutions. This loosening of the definition of institutions is echoed by John Ikenberry's (1998: 222) broader view of institutions as the 'normative social order', or more recently by Fioretos, Tulia, and Sheingate (2016: 6) 'as the rules, norms, and practices that organize and constitute social relations'. In this sense, institutions can be more than simply laws, they can be the broader "rules of the game" with regard to party competition or the IGR that appear in the framework.

New-institutionalists in general contend that outcomes or activities are structured by institutional contexts (Hall and Taylor, 1996: 941); fittingly similar to the manner in which paradiplomacy and the international agency of sub-states is understood. In this sense, the actor's agency is an important aspect, though understood slightly differently by various branches of institutionalism. Common between them however is the belief that despite pursuing their own interests, actors can only act within the margins of that institutional context and the "rules" that are constructed by them (Hay and Wincott, 1998). Consequently; '...the outcome of a political process reflects as much the institutional context as the preferences of the actors involved' (Bursens and Deforche, 2010: 159). Understanding and explaining the activities of actors therefore involves exploring the agent-structure relationship.

Nonetheless, in adopting a new institutionalist approach, implicit assumptions are adopted which must caveat any understanding or theory resulting from the employment of the framework. The understanding will inevitably be based upon the premise that the institutions “mapped” by Lecours (and added to in this project) are the key structuring factors for the agency of the sub-state. Any theory that is constructed will reflect this; it will be found that sub-states’ democracy promotion is conditioned by the institutions mapped out. The “finding” will be in explaining “how” the agent-structure dynamic plays out with regard to the institutions identified. The limitations such an approach places upon the work will be with regard to relating the understanding deriving from the framework to deterministic or rigorously deductive theoretical perspectives that emphasize other variables; Marxism and class for example. While this may appear a limitation and restriction to the investigation of the activity, it is nonetheless a position that allows the project to reflect current paradiplomacy scholarship.

3.2.2 Historical Institutionalism and the agency-structure dynamic

Although the core of new institutionalism can be defined and ‘pointed to’ (see Immergut, 1998), there are three main strands within new institutionalism; rational choice, historical (see Steinmo and Thelen, 1992), and sociological institutionalism (see Hall and Taylor, 1996). The framework calls for the adoption of a particular form of new-institutionalism and related methodological tools and concepts, namely historical institutionalism. The historical institutionalist approach also holds a particular conceptualization of agency that differs from other forms of new-institutionalism.

Historical institutionalism’s approach lies between the rational choice focus on institutions’ impact on strategies and agency (see Steinmo and Thelen, 1992: 8-9), and the sociological institutionalist focus on preference formation, the construction of interests, and of identity (see Hall and Taylor, 1996), which often has the ‘...disadvantage of taking the focus away from political institutions’ (Lecours, 2000: 512-513). For historical institutionalists; ‘not just the strategies but also the goals actors pursue are shaped by the institutional context’ (Steinmo and Thelen, 1992: 8). Both the

actions of an actor, and its identity are for the historical institutionalist, products of a symbiotic relationship with the institutional structure.

For historical institutionalism, actors are purposeful, with strategies that they pursue through and conditioned by the institutional structure. But it is not a perfect, calculus-like relationship; that would imply that institutions “cause” outcomes. Rather, ‘...historical institutionalists tend to see political actors not so much as all-knowing, rational maximizers, but more as rule-following “satisficers”’ (Steinmo and Thelen, 1992: 8). Actors follow rules and norms as much as, if not more than they strategize about maximizing self-interest. Those institutions establish the ‘rules of the game’ over time. When the rules have been set, actors tend to follow those rules unless the institutions are or have changed. Conforming to those rules is understood through the process of path dependency, explained below.

While historical institutionalists see that the strategies and actions of actors are conditioned by institutions, they also claim that their goals and identity are at least in part, shaped by those institutions and their rules (see Hall, 1992; Weir, 1992). Objectives and strategies of actors are sometimes formed, and often conditioned by their relationship with the institutions.

As will be explored in more detail below, actors also shape institutions. In taking actions, establishing, and constantly re-writing the ‘rules of the game’, particularly noticeable over time, historical institutionalists argue that actors change the nature of the institutions themselves. The institutional structure is dynamic and, over time, changing, often as a result of agency.

First, structure and agency are conceived of as comprising not a dualism but a complex duality linked in a creative relationship... Such a formulation emphasizes institutional innovation, dynamism and transformation, as well as the need for a consideration of processes of change over a significant period of time (Hay and Wincott, 1998: 956).

This symbiotic relationship calls for an historical contextualization of the institutions themselves if the actions and indeed identity of actors are to be understood. Temporal factors condition the actions and impact upon the construction of actors’ goals that in turn change the institutions. The framework calls for an historical institutionalist

approach and the next section therefore explores the conceptual tools available as a consequence.

3.3 Methodological tools and concepts

Historical institutionalism offers a more innovative and historically contextualized explanation of political activity. A rich toolkit of concepts is available with which to examine the Lecourian framework, and understand sub-state democracy promotion.

3.3.1 Path Dependency

The concept of ‘path dependency’ places the activity in its historical context. At its core is the belief that ‘institutions really have a logic of their own’ (Lecours, 2009: 9), and when actors interact within the institutional context, the outcomes (and the institutions themselves) are conditioned by the paths and rules established previously by the institutions. Positive feedback from following the established rules encourage further adherence (see Arthur, 1994).

With path dependence, each step in a particular direction makes it more likely that a unit will continue to follow that same direction. Over time, it becomes harder and harder to reverse course (Mahoney, Mohamedali and Nguyen: 2016: 82).

Activities within the institutional context follow paths of behaviour which have ‘stuck’ over time and which ‘lock-in’ other actors who “have little choice but to act within the margins of the pathway” (Bursens and Deforche, 2010: 159).

The path will also influence future changes; ‘cumulative commitments on the existing path will often make change difficult and will condition the form in which new branchings will occur’ (Pierson, 2004: 10-11). As Hay and Wincott, influenced by Tilly (1994) state;

...the order in which things happen affects how they happen; the trajectory of change up to a certain point itself constrains the trajectory after that point; and the strategic choices made at a particular moment eliminate whole ranges of possibilities from later choices while serving as the very condition of existence of others (Hay and Wincott, 1998: 955).

Path dependency helps explain continuity of action. Even when actions are not of particular interest, or that even contradict the interests or aims of actors, they can be explained by the tendency to follow the rules of institutions, and of being path dependent.

Operationalizing this concept will involve tracing the historical process of engaging in democracy promotion and international activity more broadly in order to reveal the 'paths' which have been set within the institutional context. It is a very rich and specific discussion of the historical context. Consequently the case-specific constitutional and legal history of the sub-state becomes important for understanding the domestic structuring of paradiplomacy over time. Such a concept aids the understanding of why certain activities are conducted as well as understanding continuity of activity.

3.3.2 Critical Junctures

Critical junctures are crises or key turning points that lead to profound change in the structural context. It is particularly applicable with regard to understanding institutions, and their development in the longer term.

...moments of structural indeterminacy and fluidity during which several options for radical institutional innovation are available, one (including possibly institutional re-equilibration) is selected as a consequence of political interactions and decision-making, and this initial selection carries a long-lasting institutional legacy (Capoccia, 2016: 101).

As Capoccia hints at, they are periods where the decisions and actions of actors are key in creating new, or even re-establishing the key institutions that go on to impact agency and set the "rules of the game" in the future; and 'there is a substantially heightened probability that agents' choices will affect the outcome of interest' (Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007: 348). For historical institutionalists they are dramatic focal points that help explain changes in political activity and the consequent rules and paths upon which actors become dependent. They are key formative periods therefore, and the activity and choices of agents at such periods will shape and (re-)construct the institution and the consequent "rules of the game". They are very dramatic conceptualizations of the symbiotic relationship between the actor and the institutional structure. They are also however, as detailed in the next section, only one way in which institutions change.

3.3.3 Institutional Dynamism

Accepting that change happens is a particular challenge for historical-institutionalists who conceptualize institutions as 'sticky' and change-resistant structures (see Conran and Thelen, 2016: 51-52). Dramatic critical junctures are easier to explain than periods of longer, gradual change. The power of 'path dependency' as a concept is somewhat challenged if the 'rules' can change slowly over time. In addressing this challenge however, historical institutionalism becomes a more robust means for explaining why political activity takes the form it does.

Krasner's 'punctuated equilibrium' model (1984: 223-246) argues that institutions explain activity until those institutions break down at 'critical junctures' but are then reconstructed by socioeconomic and political forces. However, this is efficiently presented by Thelen and Steinmo as an inadequate explanation, that institutions shape politics until they don't, then politics shape institutions (1992: 15). This is not to argue that critical junctures are not possible as institutions develop, only that they cannot be the only explanation for institutional change.

Historical institutionalists emphasize instead the gradual but constant interaction between institution and actor. The latter is considered as both object and agent of history (Steinmo and Thelen, 1992: 10), but institutions are also considered both structuring forces and objects of ongoing contestation (Conran and Thelen: 2016: 60-61).

More specifically, change occurs in (and through) the same time inter-relationship between strategic action and the strategic context within which it is conceived and instantiated, and in the later unfolding of its intended and unintended consequences (Hay and Wincott, 1998).

Changes in the socioeconomic or political context of an institution can affect the salience of an institution (Steinmo and Thelen, 1992: 16). Shifts in the socioeconomic or political balance of power can lead to new groups pursuing new or different goals through the institutions. Elections for example allow for the possibility of a new political party and new interests to be pursued through government institutions. Exogenous shocks are cited as a third source of dynamism which can effect change in the context of the institution. Finally, actors within the institutions can change their behaviour and

strategies. These sources of institutional dynamism can themselves initiate further means of change;

Changes in the meaning and functioning of institutions (associated with broader socioeconomic and political shifts) set in motion political struggles within but also over those institutions that in fact drive their development forward (Steinmo and Thelen, 1992: 17).

3.4 Research Themes

The Lecourian framework, its modified multi-level “map” of opportunity structures, and the accompanying historical institutionalist perspective through which the framework will be analysed, represents the analytical framework that will help better understand sub-state democracy promotion. It goes further than IR perspectives in accounting for the complexities of paradiplomacy. Further strengthening the framework however will be the thematic focus of the empirical investigation, concentrating on themes highlighted throughout chapters 1 and 2 as being integral to democracy promotion and to paradiplomacy. This section will briefly recap those research themes.

The framework itself focuses upon the relationship between agency and structure, the latter identified by the framework, and former implicitly taken as the sub-state. The structuring impact of the variables identified by the framework will be a central component of the understanding and a core theme. These include not only the domestic structures, but also the continental and global structures. However, broader themes, specific to democracy promotion will allow the understanding to relate to the academic literature.

In keeping with several IR perspectives, the motivation and therefore the nature of the agency is a central theme. Exploring notion of (sub-)national interests and the possibility that promoting democracy contributes to the pursuit of those interests will relate to core IR understandings of democracy promotion. The relationships between donors and clients, governments and practitioners, can be also be investigated by examining the key agency at play, as can the influence and appropriation of global democracy and development norms. Finally, when exploring the nature of the agency, and drawing on the sub-state literature, the presence of nationalism and its impact

upon the sub-state's agency must be a key consideration, as well as issues of transnational communication of norms.

In concluding the project, a comparative chapter will construct the understanding of sub-state democracy promotion according to the Lecourian framework, and based on an historical institutionalist reading of the data; tracing path dependencies, and identifying institutional changes. The understanding will also be guided by the broader research themes identified, framework, and based on the empirical data. Following this understanding, the third research question may be directly addressed, and specific interventions may be made with regard to the democracy promotion and paradiplomacy literatures.

3.5 Concluding remarks and research questions

In addressing the first research question, it has been noted that the democracy promotion literature explored in chapter 1 revealed an absence of concern for sub-states and consequently, perspectives for understanding sub-states and their paradiplomacy. In turning to the paradiplomacy literature in chapter 2, the review of the scholarship revealed both the lack of focus or account for democracy promotion activities, and a disconnect between studies of paradiplomacy and sub-states, and the broader IR discussions. Currently, sub-state democracy promotion is not adequately understood by either body of literature. These are currently the problems of understanding sub-state democracy promotion, and the answer to the first research question.

This chapter meanwhile has sought to detail, in theory, the answer to the second research question and the a means better understanding sub-state democracy promotion. The Lecourian framework maps the structural factors claimed by paradiplomacy scholars to be key in conditioning the paradiplomacy of sub-states. Historical institutionalism and its conceptual toolkit, as Lecours argues, offers a 'great source of theoretical insight' (2002: 97) into the complex agent-structure dynamic within that framework. Combined with the multi-level framework of opportunity structures and thematic focus drawn from the relevant literatures, it offers the most advanced means by which the paradiplomacy can be investigated. The framework

provides a means of understanding and understanding the complex agent-structure dynamic purported to characterise paradiplomacy. Furthermore, the framework is flexible and modifiable, allowing it to take account of factors claimed to structure democracy promotion and international development.

Combined, the newly adjusted framework offers a means of understanding sub-state democracy promotion in a manner that takes account of the complex agent-structure relationship, the paradiplomacy scholarship's emphasis on structuring factors, as well as the structuring factors claimed by democracy promotion scholars to influence the activity. Such an approach offers much more than the existing and unsuitable means of understanding sub-state democracy promotion; a means of better understanding sub-state democracy promotion

It remains for the project to engage with the third research question; 'In what ways will this new understanding contribute to the knowledge of sub-states and democracy promotion?' In order to answer this question, the project must first make use of the analytical framework adopted and to construct a better understanding of sub-state democracy promotion. With that understanding, the final research question may be approached.

The remainder of this chapter will therefore engage with the practicalities of that understanding, and the operationalization of the analytical framework. The following sections will therefore argue for a comparative, most different case study approach in order to generate data to better understand sub-state democracy promotion.

3.6 Case study selection

This project will examine three case studies for three main reasons. Firstly, and perhaps most pertinent considering the exploratory nature of the project, is the need to generate relevant empirical data in order to apply the Lecourian framework. Secondly, original case studies will allow for the focussed collection of data required for the implementation of the analytical framework. Finally, political phenomena, events and activities may be clarified and the understanding of them refined when compared with similar or different cases where the same activities and events arise, a comparative

approach will produce a richer understanding. If researching politics is seen as ‘a process of shifting focus from the level of *particular* pieces of information to the *general* level of theory and hypotheses’ (Burnham, Lutz, Grant, and Layton-Henry, 2008: 72), then a comparative approach assists with generalizing and building those theories. Relationships between independent and the dependent variables can be established, and a more nuanced understanding can be gained. The consequent understanding will be that much more robust and valuable, and a more rigorous answer to the third research question.

3.6.1 Small N, MDSD, and variables

As outlined in a later section, extensive analysis of the case-specific academic literature together with primary data sources such as relevant grey literature, and interviews with key personnel will generate the specific data required for analysis and implementation of the framework. The depth and quantity of qualitative data required for analysis however leads to a common trade-off between the depth of research and number of cases. The project therefore adopts the “small N” method which allows for a “deeper” focus on cases. Small N approaches are also ‘used to uncover causal paths and mechanisms and assess specific mechanisms identified in theories’, also understood as ‘process tracing’ (Halperin and Heath, 2012: 172). The volume and depth of data from such an approach allows the historical institutionalist concepts to be operationalized, and to apply the analytical framework to understand the democracy promotion of sub-states. Given the limit on numbers of cases however, the selection of cases is consequently a particularly important aspect of the project.

In seeking cases that touch upon as much of the broad spectrum of sub-states as possible, the adoption of a ‘most different system design’ (MDSD) method emerges as most suitable. The MDSD method seeks to compare cases with few common factors other than the dependent variable, the activity or phenomenon to be explained; in this case, sub-state democracy promotion. The MDSD allows for an exploration of a broader range of independent variables and factors emphasized by scholars, highlighted in chapters 1 and 2 as being of salience with regard to either democracy promotion or paradiplomacy, and identified in Lecours’ framework.

Little is known with regard to the nature of sub-state democracy promotion, and there are clear weaknesses of selecting cases based upon the dependent variable (see Burnham, Lutz, Grant, and Layton-Henry, 2008: 93; Geddes, 2003). In order also to explore the range of different independent variables therefore, and their impact upon the democracy promotion of sub-states, cases will be selected based upon these independent variables. This will allow for the comparative conclusions to account for relationships between the independent and dependent variables. In this case, following the review of paradiplomacy scholarship in chapter 2, we may identify the independent variables as the factors that scholars have emphasized as key to explaining paradiplomacy, specifically the domestic factors that condition paradiplomacy.

Lecours own emphasis is upon domestic institutions – the constitutional set-up, legal provisions, and IGR– as powerful structuring factors with regard to paradiplomacy. These are, as noted again in chapter 2, echoed by many paradiplomacy scholars. A further key factor purported by Lecours and other scholars, also discussed in chapter 2, is the presence and influence of nationalist parties. Selection of cases will therefore be primarily based upon these factors, what are viewed for the sake of selection as independent variables. Specifically, these are; the structure of the sub-state, and the presence and influence of nationalist parties at the sub-state level.

The structure of the sub-state refers to four factors. Firstly, the constitutional set-up allocates legal competence for international affairs. The legal authority, and legitimacy to act internationally in various realms of foreign relations can derive from the constitutional settlement, and are seen as key structuring factors. Secondly, the often related factor of the resources available to the sub-state for engaging in paradiplomacy. Often this will involve a budget and freedom to spend money internationally and personnel or expertise available. Combined, these factors represent the level of empowerment characterising the sub-state with regard to paradiplomacy. ‘The more power a regional government has, the better it is positioned to act beyond national borders’ (Lecours, 2002: 102).

The broader, less formal structure of the sub-state in the realm of paradiplomacy derives from the nature of the IGR between the central and the sub-state, and

constitutes the third and fourth criteria for selection. IGR in some sub-states can be conflicting, while others more cooperative. Where IGR conflict with regard to areas of foreign policy, it can drive the sub-state to develop its own engagement and paradiplomacy (Lecours, 2002: 102). The last aspect of the sub-state structure, also regarding the nature of the IGR, concerns the level of representation of the sub-state in central state level institutions. Where there is none, what Soldatos (1990: 47) called 'institutional gaps', it is theorised that '...regional leaders have no direct influence on foreign policy and may decide to develop their own' (Lecours, 2002: 102).

The final independent variable, and key factor within the Lecourian framework that will be used to select cases is the presence, success, and strength of nationalist parties at the sub-state level.

Some further factors of salience with regard to paradiplomacy can also aid in the selection of cases as secondary independent variables. While not emphasized as a key factor, the central state's foreign policy, specifically in this case its involvement in promoting democracy, is a structuring factor for Lecours, as is membership of supranational institutions such as the EU. These secondary variables will also be used to inform the selection of cases.

3.6.2 Cases selected

From these variables, and by plotting at various ends of the spectrums, the following cases are selected; Flanders in Belgium, Maryland in the USA, and Wales in the UK. These cases cover a broad range of the independent variables. The specific characteristics of each case will be outlined in the relevant chapter, but they will also be summarised here.

Flanders has been identified as the most empowered sub-state in the world with regard to paradiplomacy. It is 'The most permissive constitutional regime is in Belgium, where regions and language communities have full external competence in matters under their purview' (Keating, 1999: 11). Broad powers are explicitly referred to in the constitution through the *in foro interno in foro externo* principle roughly stating that any competence over an issue internally is accompanied by a competence for that issue externally. The

right to sign treaties and the non-hierarchy principles also ensure that Flanders is *the* sole legitimate actor in a range of fields. Formal IGR allow for input and indeed for Flanders to lead Belgian delegations to the EU and abroad in areas of competence (see Crikemans, 2010b: 91-93). A fully-fledged international affairs department also received the additional competence and budget for international development following a further constitutional reform in 2000. Finally, the nationalist party, though relatively weak at the time of the reforms of 1993 (which essentially established Flanders in its current form), has grown to a position of prominence, if not dominance of the regional, indeed national political context. The N-VA entered into coalition government in Flanders in 2004, 2009, and 2014, and at the Federal level in 2014 also.

With regard to the secondary variables, Flanders does have privileged access to the EU as a leader of Belgian delegations in areas of competence. Belgium however is not distinguished as a particularly influential or major promoter of democracy abroad.

The second case selected is Maryland in the USA. Representing another end of the spectrum compared to Flanders, Maryland is constrained in the international realm by its domestic structure, with a minimal nationalist presence. The US Constitution is vague with regard to the division of international competence between the Federal and State level. Treaty-signing is prohibited, broader activities are not explicitly referred to, and there is no concurrent list of actual powers and competences (Kincaid, 1999: 111-112). Authority for international activity has 'rested largely on constitutional interpretation, political practice, historical tradition, and intergovernmental comity'. (Kincaid, 1999: 112). These elements of the sub-state's structure have constrained Maryland and other US states to functional or economic international actors, with the Federal government clearly defined, even if not explicitly in the Constitution, as the legitimate international actor with regard to political activities.

Relations with the central government are argued to be such that they do not encourage States to engage in primary strategies and paradiplomacy. 'Central structures that provide for a formal representation of territorial units, as is the case in the United States with the Senate, do not create as favourable conditions' (Lecours, 2002: 102).

The territorial-political identity of the state meanwhile is weak at best, and has not manifested itself as a political force in the form of a significant nationalist party. While not enjoying membership of the EU, US states do offer a further aspect which justifies selection in that they are constituent parts of arguably the most prominent democracy promoter in the world. Democracy promotion has become a defining feature of US foreign policy over the last century or so (see Bridoux and Kurki, 2014: 121-126; Carothers, 1999: 5).

Finally, Wales offers an insight into the 'other' possibilities. A constituent part of a Unitary as opposed to a Federal state, Wales holds no formal capacity or competence in international affairs; '...the United Kingdom Government is responsible for international relations. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs is responsible for the foreign policy of the United Kingdom' (UK Government, 2013: 47). However, 'In the United Kingdom, relationships between central and sub-state governments are highly partisan and governments are suspicious of anything that might give opposition forces a platform' (Keating, 1999: 12). Nonetheless, through the flexible and a largely informal IGR with the UK government, Wales has managed to secure limited international engagement with global partners beyond economic and co-operational paradiplomatic activity (see Royles, 2010). There is a distinct national identity, though the nationalist party, Plaid Cymru, has only ever shared coalition government with the dominant (and strongly unionist) Labour Party on one occasion (2007-11).

With regard to the secondary variables, Wales again exhibits 'other' possibilities within the categories. The UK is a member of the EU but its government leads on all delegations, while Wales must lobby its own government, internally for influence and access to Europe. The UK meanwhile is a prominent democracy promoter through both its international development programmes and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy. But its involvement does not match that of the USA's.

The three cases provide an opportunity to explore the relationship between the independent variables and sub-state democracy promotion. While the variables are not 'hard' or quantifiable, through the comparative approach, the data should allow for

relationships between the variables to be recognized and incorporated into the understanding of sub-state democracy promotion.

3.6.3 Generalizability and comparability

...good case studies are nearly always situated in a comparative context. They address theory or issues that have wider intellectual relevance, use concepts that are applicable to other contexts, and may even seek to make inferences that apply to countries beyond the original case (Halperin and Heath, 2012: 205).

Halperin and Heath essentially emphasize the importance of generalizability in comparative case studies. Indeed the generalizability of the studies selected are key in order to make broader claims regarding sub-state democracy promotion, and for the understanding to be “better” than currently available. In selecting most different cases, the project immediately seeks to cover a variety of sub-state, far more generalizable than similar cases of a particular type; the approach can emphasize similarities, and examine a range of relationships between the independent variables and the dependent, as well as the differences between cases. The discussion chapter will highlight commonalities and differences between the cases, ensuring that the understanding of sub-state democracy promotion is grounded in the data. Ultimately therefore, the generalizability of the findings are also based on the comparability of the cases themselves. Comparability is of further importance in that it lends rigour to the research project.

To ensure comparability, the three cases will be dealt with as uniformly as practicable, and the data collection method will be replicated. Cases have been selected based on a common framework. Key themes have been highlighted and will guide the three empirical explorations. Similar documentation will be investigated in each case. A common interview script will provide the basis for interview, and personnel from similar positions will be interviewed in the three cases. A common time frame is used for the three cases, namely the post-Cold War period; a period already identified as a key phase in the development of democracy promotion as a practice. The comparability and generalizability of the project lends rigour to the research project, allowing it to make claims and interventions with regard to the existing literature.

3.6.4 Data sources and research methods

Finally, the validity of the case studies, and ultimately the comparative conclusions and understanding constructed in chapter 7 will also be reliant upon the data sources used as a basis for analysis. The project will draw from primary and secondary sources, as well as semi-structured interviews. The data sources available are mainly qualitative, however some quantitative sources such as budgetary and financial reports, voting patterns will support the exploration.

The preliminary data collection will involve literature reviews of the secondary and such primary documents that are available. These will include academic, legal and constitutional literatures, constitutional documents and their surrounding explanatory notes and memorandums or concordats; political party manifestos, key speeches, policy literature. Legislature-based, and public debate through the media will also support the analysis of the political context surrounding the activities. The central and sub-state's key foreign policy speeches, policy literature, and announcements will also assist. Policy and regulatory documents of the supra-national political or economic institutions will also contribute to building a firmer and more rigorous understanding of the Lecourian framework.

The second phase of data collection will involve the collection of new, primary data. Unpublished and internal documents can assist in filling holes that the preliminary phase could not. Meanwhile, semi-structured interviews with key personnel involved with sub-state democracy promotion offer a key source of particularly relevant data. Interviewing personnel who are 'in the game' of democracy promotion offers a great level of freedom to explore specific issues of actor-institution relationships, or the inter-actor relationships and competitions within the institutional context, or other aspects of the themes where other sources are not available, applicable or suitable. The multiple techniques and sources of data used for this project will strengthen its rigour, and offer a 'thick' description of hitherto under-researched topics.

With the framework in place, and cases selected, the following three chapters will explore the cases in order to generate data for a comparative conclusion; the basis for chapter 7's understanding of sub-state democracy promotion.

Chapter 4: Flanders

This first of three case study chapters will examine the democracy promotion activities of Flanders since the major reforms of 1993. The case studies are a means of generating data which will provide the basis for a better understanding of sub-state democracy promotion and answering the project's third research question. The Lecourian framework's emphasis on domestic structures of the sub-state, and their use within this project as key independent variables, necessitates a rigorous initial exploration. This will be followed by detailed examinations of democracy promotion activities engaged in by Flanders before a concluding section which will relate specifically to the Lecourian framework and offers a understanding of Flemish democracy promotion.

4.1.1 Belgium and Flanders

The Kingdom of Belgium was created in 1830 after secession from the United Kingdom of the Low Countries. Bridging Latin and Germanic Europe, its heterogeneous linguistic and cultural make-up has become a defining feature giving rise to, and then recognized in, the constitutional and federalization reforms since the 1970s. Around 60% of the 11 million inhabitants live in the Northern region of Flanders with a little over 10% living in the capital, Brussels and the rest in the Southern, Walloon region. Economically, the two main regions experienced contrasting fortunes during the second half of the 20th century;

...while Wallonia had been the industrial heart of Belgium, the decay of the post-war coal and steel industries shifted the bulk of socio-economic policy-making to Flanders... [Flanders] was more successful in attracting foreign direct investment and in developing medium-sized enterprises or service industries (Swenden, 2005: 189).

Indeed, such economic, as well as cultural divergence between the Dutch speaking, and strengthening service economy of Flanders, and the French-speaking, declining heavy industry economy of Walloon have been placed at the root of the 35-year federalization process (see Deschouwer, 2012: 38-40).

1970 saw the first of five major state reforms with the others in 1980, 1988, 1993, and 2001. Each reform deepened and institutionalized the federalization, while also devolving powers (see Deschouwer, 2012: 38-44). With the important exception of a

particularly brutal colonial legacy in the Congo and Great Lakes region of Africa (see Hochschild, 1998), Belgium has not weighed heavily on the global political scene in comparison to the UK or US and is not considered a major democracy promoter.

4.1.2 Governance structures in Flanders

The dyadic character of the modern Belgian system, and its broader legitimacy, derives from the federalization into communities and regions (Swenden, 2005). Modern Belgium consists of a double federated system of communities – Flemish, French and German-speaking; and regions – Flemish, Walloon and the Brussels Capital region. A considerable amount of legislative and administrative competence is placed in the hands of the Communities and Regions. The constitutional reforms have led to Belgian communities and regions, and Flanders in particular as both a community and a region combined, becoming some of the most administratively and legislatively competent sub-states in the world (Keating, 1999: 11).

With regard to the formal powers and capabilities of Flanders, most are explicitly referred to in the constitution. It is this national level therefore – the construction and make-up of the Belgian state as a whole – that structures for Flanders so many opportunities to engage in international activity. The 1970 constitution created a federal system and the notion that governance should be shared amongst the federated entities. Bursens and Deforche (2010: 162) argue that successive reforms also ‘locked in’ key principles which, along with its competences, define the nature of Flemish foreign activities.

The *in foro interno in foro externo* principle was constitutionally enshrined in 1988 and extended to the regions in 1993. It legally requires the various federated entities of Belgium to take international responsibility for any domestic competences they hold. Effectively establishing Flanders as sovereign within their competences both domestically and internationally.

They are under no form of political tutelage by the federal government in jurisdictions belonging to them alone, including the international aspects of those jurisdictions (Bursens and Massart-Pierard, 2009: 96).

Closely associated with this principle, and facilitating its realization is the authority granted to federated entities to conclude treaties both on their own accord and alongside the federal government (*'ius tractati'*) and to send their own representations abroad (*'ius legationis'*) to bilateral or multilateral posts. Flanders' *ius legationis* and *ius tractati* have enabled extensive engagement at the global level in pursuit of the functional as well as political objectives of its foreign policy. Firstly, its ability to conclude treaties has enabled a strategic approach to its bilateral relations; between 1993-2008, Flanders concluded 27 bilateral treaties (Criekmans, 2010b: 88); these were the foundation stones of the Central Eastern European Programme and the Chile partnership. Secondly, the ability to send representations has enabled engagement with multilateral organizations such as the ILO, UNAIDS and WHO for example and the development of the 'dual-membership' both as Flanders, and through Belgium's membership.

The non-hierarchy principle, meaning that federal and regional laws have equivalent status, was introduced during the reforms of 1981. No one level of government is 'above' another. This principle emphasizes the need for federated entities to be active internationally in their respective policy fields. The federal state could not retrospectively 'trump' the Regional or Community legislation to bring it into line with international treaties or multilateral decisions for example (see also Bursens and Massart-Pierard, 2009: 98). The principle establishes and protects the sovereignty of the constituent unit within the allocated field of competence but also encourages and drives the relatively strong, formal level of IGR to ensure coordination and prevent infringement on each other's competences.

Indeed, IGR has emerged as a key cog in the Belgian set-up. Extensive, formal institutions have been constructed in order to coordinate the international affairs of the federal and federated entities of Belgium. Beneath the overarching 'Consultation Committee' and the Interministerial Conference for Foreign Policy, sit a collection of smaller committees and working groups constantly coordinating foreign activity and ensuring that no infringement takes place (see Criekmans, 2010b: 49). Such arrangements allow the various levels of the Belgian state to represent themselves abroad;

The solution developed for this potential conflict is as follows; the Belgian Regions and Communities do enjoy maximal autonomy *so long as* the coherence of the foreign policy of the federation does not come in jeopardy (Criekemans, 2010b: 50).

By the completion of the 1993 reforms, Communities in Belgium had become responsible for the fields of education, culture, media, language and some healthcare while the Regions were given legislative and administrative competence over industrial policy, transport, planning, the environment, agriculture, trade and employment. As both a Community and Region, very little by now is outside the scope of the Flemish Government both domestically or internationally. Indeed; '[b]oth Flanders and Wallonia now conduct a foreign policy which ranges across all their (internal) policy domains' (Criekemans, 2010b: 46). The federal level has meanwhile remained in control of social security, justice, home affairs and defence. Crucially, with regard to this project, the Hermes agreement of 2000 (realised in the 2001 state reforms) also paved the way for the devolution of the competence and budget over international development, and clear responsibility for what this project has termed political paradiplomacy.

This constitutional set-up;

...is an exceptionally original solution which offers the Belgian Communities and Regions the possibility to develop both their own geopolitical priorities and [sic] their own functional interests and accents in foreign policy, as long as the coherence of the foreign policy of the federation is not threatened (Criekmans, 2010b: 44).

The 1988/1993 reforms can therefore be understood as a critical constitutional juncture and a key factor in the development in Flemish foreign policy (see Bursens and Deforche, 2010: 162). It created not only the legal opportunity and means, but also the constitutional imperative to develop international activities. In short, they made Flanders *the* legitimate actor in foreign affairs for many fields. However, while establishing a constitutional responsibility and role, the reforms did not define the personality of the newly federated units; what activities the Flemish government would engage in, and which values it would align to.

4.1.2 Flemish nationalism

With regard to nationalist parties, the Volksunie (VU) Flemish nationalist party broke through in 1954 and grew to share power by the late 1970s only, with growing competition from the far-right nationalist Vlaams Blok, for its fortunes to decline after its spell in office. Its eventual demise in 2001 occurred after entering Patrick Dewael's (1999-2001) Liberal-led coalition government (van Haute and Pilet 2006: 299). Regionalism was seen to be on the decline in Belgium during by the late 1990s, particularly in Wallonia, but with Flanders following the trend (Deschouwer, 2009: 559-560; 2012: 138). The Volksunie's successor however, the Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie (N-VA), experienced astonishing electoral success in the space of a decade, not least due to the efforts of its charismatic leader, Bart DeWever (see Rochtus, 2012), and had by 2015 been a partner in Flemish government on three occasions (2004, 2009, 2014), holding the foreign policy brief twice (2004 and 2014), and even entered the Federal government coalition in 2014.

4.1.3 International affairs in domestic politics

Despite the government's competence and freedom to pursue paradiplomacy of all kinds, international affairs has not emerged as a contentious battlefield between the rival political parties of Flanders. This may reflect the perception of foreign affairs as an issue of relatively low importance amongst the electorate. A former senior government advisor reflects upon the situation;

Of course people know about Europe. But when you look at the debates, it's mostly about domestic policy... In the public sphere, no there's no discussion about it... There is no very strong popular demand on a distinctive Flemish international policy. I do not think that is the case. I believe that it is very much stronger in for instance Quebec or even Scotland or Catalonia than it is in our case...ⁱ

Nonetheless, Flanders and its government has been compelled to engage internationally in support of its domestic economy. One long-serving senior civil servant sees the nature of Flanders' economy as the justification for a significant focus upon the economic dimension of international affairs;

...we are basically an export nation, Flanders counts for about 83% or 84% of the Belgian exports, we live from our exports that really remains the most important element of our economy with also our big ports like Antwerp and Zebbrugge and Ghent. So it's quite important for us to be quite active in that field and that's why we have really a substantial network of trade commissioners everywhere in the world. We have a network of more than 70 trade commissioners and we have representatives in about 100 different places.ⁱⁱ

Much of Flanders' international activity is indeed functional and economic in nature, responding to this domestic demand and the need to access globalized policy fora in relation to other domestic portfolios. But despite not registering as a major issue on the domestic scene, foreign policy beyond the functional or economic has proved an important field for some political parties and consequently for Flemish governments.

4.1.4 Establishing Flemish foreign policy (1993-1999)

Central to the government's approach from the outset has been the desire to 'insert' Flanders onto the international stage, not just for economic reasons. As one senior cabinet member recalls;

...the aim was to put Flanders on the map. This I will not say was the only rationale, but in fact it was a point because we know, certainly in that period and also before and probably today as well, that [in order] to deepen relationships, there is an aim to be put on the map. And why to be put on the map? Because it has ramifications in the cultural setting between, in this case Flanders and other nation states and regions. But also the economic, it can be helpful to show that it's possible that a small region after all, may contribute to the better relationship, to tangible projects and so on. That was the reason why in this context also we were may I say, developing this central European fund [Central and Eastern European Programme] where the idea of partnership was essential.ⁱⁱⁱ

In establishing the criteria for bilateral engagement shortly after the 1993 reforms, Luc Van den Brande's Christelijke Volkspartij (CD&V)⁴ government effectively defined and established the rules of the international game and placed the principle of 'inserting' Flanders at the heart of the government's approach. The guiding principles for international relations and the criteria for relations between Flanders and other partners were set out in the 1995 'Policy Note' on foreign affairs, the formal political

⁴ Christian People's Party at the time, by 2001 it had changed to Christen-Democratisch en Vlaams (CD&V)

guidance of the minister to the department (Criekemans, 2010b: 52). The justifying criteria for foreign relations were guided by this ‘concentration policy’, outlined in nine points;

1. common language, culture and history;
2. geographic proximity;
3. (potential) intensity of economic and trade relations;
4. parallel vision on and involvement in the construction of the European integration project;
5. similarity of state structure (federalism);
6. attachment to democracy and human rights;
7. (the need for support and cooperation, and) the possibility for Flanders to develop solidarity actions in a meaningful way;
8. strategic location and international impact;
9. willingness to recognize Flanders as a (full-fledged) partner.

(cited in Criekemans, 2010b: 52)

Though over two decades old, the guidelines are “...still implicitly used as a beacon and policy-tool to guide political choices” (Criekemans, 2010b: 53), and are still very familiar to departmental staff responsible for international activities. As one long-serving senior civil servant in the department claims;

...these things have been constantly rephrased in other words but basically you will find them quite solidly present over several political generations through governments of the last two decades.^{iv}

Indeed, the Flemish Government coalition agreement of 2014 reiterated the same broad objectives, though streamlined to five key points;

We will implement an autonomous, mature and professional Flemish foreign policy that (1) works to profile Flanders abroad in an individual and targeted manner, (2) focuses on international enterprise and targeted economic and public diplomacy, (3) has an effective and more direct voice in the EU, (4) adopts an active and focused policy with regard to its neighbouring countries

and a multilateral approach and (5) strives for development cooperation (Government of Flanders, 2014:182).

Officials at the department responsible for international activity perceive that these themes form the strategic heart of Flemish foreign policy even if they do not refer to them explicitly as any kind of Flemish (sub-)national interest.

An attachment to democracy and human rights as well as the need for support and cooperation with Flanders in developing meaningful solidarity are two central points that have morphed into the 2014 commitment to development cooperation. The willingness to recognize Flanders as a partner as well as the (potential) intensity of economic partnership are also key guiding principles to this day. Finally, and still at the heart of Flemish policy as it was at the outset, is the determination to profile and insert Flanders onto or into the world, to 'put Flanders on the map'.

Flemish foreign policy was defined at a very early stage. The institutionalist concept of path dependency is useful in explaining the longevity of this policy approach, remaining as it has done, practically unchanged for over twenty years. Without a significant period of institutional dynamism, nor a critical juncture to force a major revision, official Flemish foreign policy has remained constant.

More importantly perhaps, it was the Van den Brande's government that also initiated a range of innovative and at times large international activities that would run for a decade or more. The CEEP and bilateral relations with Chile and South Africa are explored in detail below, and are a testament to the determination of the CD&V government to match rhetoric with action.

4.1.5 Foreign policy from 1999-2016

The liberal and nationalist-led administrations of the 2000s can be characterised by their organizational focus, and political disinterest in the realm of foreign affairs when compared to the CD&V government of the 1990s. The Liberal-led government of Patrick Dewael (1999-2003) looked only to emphasize the economic benefits of foreign affairs (detailed in the section on the CEEP below). The NVA's approach to foreign affairs meanwhile, involved of a 'verticalization' of governance structures (see Criekemans, 2010b: 44), and the establishment of FICA to coordinate the newly devolved

international development programmes. No new activities were initiated beyond the development programmes, and officials claim they were left to look toward contributions to multilateral organizations such as the ILO in order to fulfil their core missions, rather than a Van den Brande style initiation of bilateral, distinctly Flemish schemes.^v

Even when the NVA government did engage in a new activity, and although FICA launched its international development programmes, its political lead was not forthcoming. FICA was to be established after competence over international development was devolved following the Hermes agreement of 2000. Its mission was to ‘...to help close the North-South gap, promote sustainable development in the South and realise a just, peaceful and prosperous international community’ (FICA, 2012: 4). Until its incorporation into the department under the 2014-19 government, the agency acted as an intermediary body to administer programmes and implement the broad development strategy which is developed at the departmental and ministerial level.

FICA however enjoyed a significant degree of freedom with regard to beyond the broad, political instructions passed on by successive governments in policy notes. This derived mainly from a) the requirement of the department to meet the broad, politically established objectives (the five broad points outlined above); and b) the concurrent relative disinterest in foreign policy of politicians in the government. The department was to work toward objectives, but without much ministerial interest in how the objectives were pursued. As one foreign affairs official states;

...the fact that the government is not always that aware of the way we work but they lay down the general principles, we do have, as an administration, a sort of space to see how that would best be implemented. We always, always ask for the agreement of the government, but we do the suggesting.^{vi}

The major international vision was established by the CD&V, and has remained as ingrained guiding principles within Flemish foreign policy since. The NVA have not altered the core strategic objectives of Flemish foreign policy which had been laid by the Van den Brande government. Despite a prominent presence in government, the NVA did not expand the foreign affairs of Flanders, and the ambitious activities initiated by the CD&V during the 1990s were, as will be noted, were left to expire by NVA

administrations. What is striking in the Flemish case is the enthusiasm of the first, CD&V government after the 1993 reforms, the longevity of their strategic approach, and the relative disinterest of the nationalist party in developing foreign activities. The strong nationalist presence would theoretically increase the sub-state's likelihood of engaging abroad. But although economic paradiplomacy dominates government foreign policy, re-emphasized by the Liberal administrations of the 2000s, Luc Van den Brande's CD&V government established a clear path and set of rules, as well as a range of activities during the 1995-1999 period. Inserting Flanders onto the global stage, developing economic ties, and a commitment to democracy and development are core strands of a consistent foreign policy which has existed since the first statement in 1995, despite a loss of enthusiasm and decline in distinctive activities and projects during the 2000s.

This analysis reveals that *institutional capacity* and *constitutional competence* act as institutional structures setting Flanders as a particularly powerful and legitimate international actor. A strong nationalist party has frequently held power. Official and well defined processes of *IGR* exist that also facilitate Flemish input into Belgian foreign policy even when the sub-state doesn't hold competence. Belgian membership of the *EU* and an export economy theoretically offers opportunities and motivations for engaging abroad, while Belgium itself is not a significant democracy promoter.

This chapter will proceed by exploring three specific activities in detail; the Central and Eastern European Programme; the bilateral relationship with Chile; and Flanders' international development assistance programme.

4.2 The Central and Eastern European Programme (CEEP)

Interviews indicated that even before the 1993 reforms, Flemish politicians had conceived of the post-soviet Central and Eastern European countries and their transition to market economies and liberal democracies as being worthy of the assistance of Flanders' Government.^{vii} The Central and Eastern European Programme (CEEP) came to fruition from this early, moral desire to assist the region during the first post-93 Flemish Government led by the Christian Democrats and Minister-President, Luc Van Den Brande. The programme coordinated, supported, and enhanced the combined bilateral relations with Central and Eastern European states. Until its

conclusion in 2008, it occupied a position of prime importance within Flemish foreign policy; 'Over the past fifteen years, cooperation with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe has been one of the priorities of Flanders' foreign policy' (Departement internationaal Vlaanderen, 2009: 6). After brief overview of the pertinent opportunity structures, this section will firstly present an account of the programme and its development before discussing its motivations.

4.2.1 Structural context

The newly acquired powers to conclude treaties and formalize bilateral relations between Flanders and other actors, and the willingness of Central and Eastern European states to engage with Flanders created the opportunity for the CEEP. The first, post-1993 government led by the Christian Democrats' willingness to engage in such a programme proved the key, initial impetus. This was a 'new' activity for a sub-state; broad and very political, being involved in changing the governance regime of half a continent. The government's agency within the new structural context in capitalizing on the opportunities – not a requirement of the new competences – brought the programme into being.

A further key factor facilitating Flanders' engagement in such a programme was the global political context. The Flemish Government's own evaluation of the programme explicitly recognizes the importance of a stabilized global political situation played in allowing Flanders to engage internationally in such a political manner;

The accession of ten Central and Eastern European countries to NATO led to the filling of the security vacuum which had arisen following the end of the Cold War, to the stabilization of the region and to the integration of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe into Western security structures. It must be acknowledged that NATO's enlargement to the East contributed to the realization of the objectives of the Programme [author's translation] (Departement internationaal Vlaanderen, 2009: 20).

While the CEEP was possible due to the constitutional empowerment of Flanders, the global political and security context was equally pertinent in facilitating and creating opportunities for engagement and democracy promotion.

4.2.2 The CEEP

Flanders' programme for assisting the transition of Central and Eastern European countries from Soviet communism ran from 1992-2008. In total, it spent Euro97.5 million, funding 350 organizations, implementing 737 projects, in 18 countries (Departement internationaal Vlaanderen, 2009: 13). It financed and co-financed projects run by Flemish organizations in partner countries.

Flemish organizations would submit proposals to the Government in order to be considered for financial, or other support. Proposals were approved by an advisory committee which from the start included members from the partner country – an element of local ownership and control over projects long before the democracy industry turned to such mechanisms.

Activities were financed in a broad range of fields, mainly economic cooperation, but also projects in areas such as environment, health, socio-cultural work, infrastructure, consultation, education and governance. Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia were the initial partners but in 1995 the Baltic States and Romania were incorporated, in 2001 Bulgaria and Slovenia became involved and in 2005 several Balkan countries became partners (Departement internationaal Vlaanderen, 2009: 5).

4.2.3 First phase

The programme itself can be split into two distinct phases. The initial phase (1992-2000) is one of freedom and a broad, sometimes unconnected and unevaluated range of programmes. The department's own evaluation report concedes that; 'This is mainly the result of the decision from the outset to choose a very broad thematic programming [author's translation]' (Departement internationaal Vlaanderen, 2009: 19). The breadth also reflected the fact that the projects were based on the bilateral treaties with the various partner states with some variation between them. 420 projects were initiated during this phase, spending 2.5b BEF (Vanden Berghe, Van Alstein and Neeb, 2004: 6). Some of these projects promoted democracy and sought to reform governance practices. Unfortunately, detailed breakdowns of individual projects were not kept by the Flemish government at the time the research was undertaken.

One example of the programmes running would be the support to reform the Polish healthcare system along the lines of the Flemish model of intermediate health insurance organizations. These organizations provide the insurance services to Flemish individuals, but also play an important role in the governance decisions relating to healthcare and in influencing decisions regarding the administration of services.

In Poland the Christian Health Insurances with the support of the Flemish government founded the first Health Insurance, which offers a ‘third way’ in Polish healthcare next to outdated public health and the unbridled freedom of private healthcare (Vanden Berghe, Van Alstein and Neeb, 2004: 6-7).

The attempt at exporting this model had, by the early 2000s, faced difficulties where it;

...was clear that the time is not yet ripe for mutual insurance companies in Poland. The patient is still living with an old way of thinking, where healthcare was free [author’s translation] (Skrzypiec-Sikorska, 2002: 68).

Nonetheless, a distinct attempt at developing a dialogue between private service providers, governance institutions, and broader society went hand-in-hand with the support offered to the attempts at reforming the healthcare system (see also Descan, 2002).

As a senior civil servant recalls;

...the government at the time made the assessment that we could help to make these kinds of transitions by engaging our own intermediate bodies, and to connect them to these new interlocutors in Central and eastern Europe. So the programme in essence tried to mobilize our universities, our trade unions, our local economic development boards, our whatever. What we call the intermediate organizations.^{viii}

It can be seen as an example of the explicitly stated attempt at ‘promoting Flanders as a democratic model of society [author's translation]’ (Departement internationaal Vlaanderen, 2009: 18). More specifically, the democracy projects at this time, and the ‘democratic model of society’ in question, can be characterised by an attempt to develop or export the Flemish concept of *overleg*, meaning cooperative, consultative, or concerted decision-making.

Within Belgium, legislative and policy emphasis is placed upon the importance of social dialogue and ‘*overleg*’ and manifested through the work of the Federal Public Service

Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue (see Federale Overheidsdienst Werkgelegenheid arbeid en Sociaal Overleg, 2015), which promotes the continuity of this social-governance model. The importance of consultation and cooperation between the central and periphery actors, specifically governance structures and society, in decision making is stressed and cultivated. As far back as 1948, Belgian law enforced the creation of employment councils within businesses employing over 100 persons in order to engage and consult with governance structures on issues of employment and social policy. During the first phase of the CEEP, the governance assistance within the programme involved a similar focus on fostering consultation, *overleg* and dialogue between intermediate bodies and the governance structures.

Furthermore, it was evident from conversations with staff members involved with the programme that they were aware of their own, distinctive contribution. In the words of one senior civil servant;

How do you, as a trade union, how do you negotiate with government on draft legislation, on say labour standards? We have a strong tradition of both employers organizations and trade unions being fairly closely engaged in policy preparing and dialogue with government... And also these elements of our socio-economic model; we call it in Dutch an *overleg* economy. It's concerted policymaking. These points have been put forward as something that we could contribute in their process of transition.^{ix}

Flemish practitioners were aware that developing *overleg* was a distinctly Flemish or Belgian approach to supporting democracy. It is perceived within Flanders as an essential element, key to the success of the Belgian system. As one senior diplomat claims;

The key principle in our system, if we want to keep it credible and workable, the key principle, the cardinal principle is *overleg* –that's an important word. The Dutch word for concertation. It's not coordination and it's more than communication. It's between dialogue and... concertation in order to come to an agreed position, and that's very important.^x

4.2.4 Second phase

The second phase can be characterized by a turn to the EU for guidance and lead, a decision which can be traced to Patrick Dewael's Liberal-led coalition government (1999-2003). Before conducting a review, a policy decision had been taken to deliberately align the programme to the EU's approach to the region. Its criticism of the CEEP was that it was;

...not preceded by a thorough analysis...there was no clear picture of the exact needs in the region and that the strategic objectives had been insufficiently translated into specific or measurable objectives...All of this meant that the policy was not sufficiently adjusted to react to the evolutions in Central and Eastern Europe (Vanden Berghe, Van Alstein and Neeb, 2004: 11).

In its consequent 'policy note' to the department, the Government set the direction of travel for the second phase, declaring that;

More so than has hitherto been the case, it [the CEEP] will be better aligned with the EU framework. Bilateral cooperation will be linked and dependent on the willingness to cooperate with the partner countries within the EU programmes [author's translation] (Dewael, Sauwens, and Anciaux, 2000: 30).

The continuation of the programme by the Liberal-led coalition, characteristically ambivalent toward international activities,^{xi} was justified by the potential economic benefit of offering support.

...these countries have significant growth potential economic and trade cooperation. Assistance to these countries for the development of their democratic and social structures, assisting in the improvement of their environment, and sharing their scientific and cultural wealth, offers undeniable advantages for Flanders [author's translation] (Dewael, Sauwens, and Anciaux, 2000: 29).

More specifically, the EU membership of the partner countries became an explicit objective and the accession criteria set out in 1993 at Copenhagen provided a means of determining the kinds of projects funded and providing a means of evaluating progress. The ten candidate countries became the priority partners. With regard to the new emphasis in of the project;

More specifically, the emphasis was placed on preparing the countries involved for accession by means of training programmes, training civil servants and experts, transfer of knowledge with regard to legislation, supporting the adoption of the European *acquis communautaire*, contributing to the development of a democratic midfield, propagating ecological objectives and solutions, supporting the free market economy by means of training, promoting cooperation with Flemish SMEs, etc. (Vanden Berghe, Van Alstein and Neeb, 2004: 15).

Elements of the more organic or Flemish focus on *overleg* persist in this period, however there is a clear slant toward EU standards and objectives.

During this second period, the changes in administrative organization are also noteworthy. The decision to move the administrative duties from the Economic to the Foreign Affairs department allowed for a more strategic approach and the possibility of utilizing other international avenues in pursuit of the CEEP's goals. It is notable for example that by 2004, the programme's management had developed a 'fixer' role. It had begun aligning Flemish organizations with larger, mainly EU funding pots such as the PHARE and TACIS programmes or using the work conducted through Flanders' cooperation agreement with the International Labour Organization to meet the objectives of the CEEP.^{xii} The multilateral relations of the Flemish Foreign Affairs department were utilized to complement and support the pursuit of CEEP objectives which extended beyond the economic.

The consequences of such a development however was a more pronounced alignment with those organizations' practices, objectives and evaluation criteria. Measurements, indices and the definitions of success were adopted from the established global practitioners. indices such as the 'World Governance Indicator Dataset' from the World Bank; Freedom House' 'Press Freedom Indicators'; the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's 'Transition Indicators' would later be adopted and used to evaluate the democratization of these societies (Departement internationaal Vlaanderen, 2009: Part II). This is the means by which the initial criticisms of the programme's review were met; by adopting globally accepted means of evaluation and partner/programme selection.

4.2.5 Motivations

It is claimed that the original conception for a comprehensive programme for supporting post-Soviet Central and Eastern Europe came from an altruistic, moral desire to support the partner countries as well as the domestic-level links that already existed. As a senior member of the Cabinet at the time recalls;

...together with the secretary general and some friends of my cabinet team, we were saying, just like that; 'we have to do something'...We have to do it, it was our responsibility, our duty to do something. You have to notice that already before, in the period of Jaruzelski and Wałęsa, there was an important Flanders movement from the Christian Workers' Association, A-CV at the time, there was a lot of people, city by city, all kinds of associations contributing, going with trucks to, at that time mostly to Poland.^{xiii}

This moral motivation is reflected in the wording of the official policy note at the time which referred to the '...moral duty of Flanders to contribute to the changes in Eastern Europe' [author's translation] (Nota voor de Vlaamse Executieve, 1992: 1).

As the programme was developed however, a broader range of motivations were explicitly outlined in official publications of the government and coalition agreement during the programme's early stages. It was declared by the Government that Flanders had a '...duty to assist the process of democratization and economic reform policies, the support of which is an essential condition for political stability...[author's translation]' (Departement internationaal Vlaanderen, 2009: 17). Also identified however was the more self-centred motivation, and now explicit objective to 'put Flanders on the map [author's translation]' (Departement internationaal Vlaanderen, 2009: 17). From the earliest stages of planning therefore, the Flemish government had moved from the 'moral' motivation to a more instrumental and strategic intervention of supporting economic and democratic reforms in Central and Eastern Europe as a means of inserting itself onto the international stage and into a global economy.

The alignment of the CEEP to the strategic objective of placing Flanders on the international stage is not difficult to spot. Within a decade of the programme, scholars had already begun claiming that; 'Flanders saw conducting policy in Central and Eastern Europe as an opportunity to set itself up as an internationally acceptable partner' (Vanden Berghe, Van Alstein and Neeb, 2004: 4). David Criekemans (2010b: 53-54) also

claims that a key objective of the programme was to bring Flanders into contact with the new governments of Central and Eastern Europe.

Interviews with senior civil servants and members of that period's Cabinet suggest that the CEEP was also, at least in part, an attempt at concerting and constructing the domestic understanding of Flemish society. As a senior member of the cabinet during the CEEP's formative years recalls;

...in fact I prefer to use 'to put Flanders on the map' [rather than 'nation building']...the first purpose was certainly not to go for extra nation-building. It was more to innovate, and it is not just about the central level that we had to incorporate but on all kinds of levels...the idea [was] that improved institutional, constitutional legitimacy could and would lead in fact to empower the people of Flanders and the Flemings. But it is not so easy to make sharply the dividing line between what you call nation building and may I say, positioning in a broader world.^{xiv}

The CEEP was a means of putting Flanders on the map in the eyes of Flemings as well as the world. There was also an emphasis upon the perceived economic benefit for Flanders.

For Flemish trade and industry it is advantageous to be present on the growth markets in Central and Eastern Europe. For this it is important that in the countries in question there is an open and fully-fledged free market economy that offers opportunities for increasing economic traffic between Flanders and the partner countries and vice versa. Political stability is a requirement for Flemish trade and industry to invest in the region, whilst the creation of welfare in the region will result in increasing sales markets (Nota aan de Vlaamse regering, 2001: 11, cited in Vanden Berghe, Van Alstein and Neeb, 2004: 14).

The importance of the economic benefit was reflected initially by the locating of the CEEP's management within the economic development portfolio of the Flemish government. The attempts to work in conjunction with 'Export Flanders' to develop the trade relationship further reinforces the importance of the economic dimension of the programme. Furthermore, the Liberal coalition's policy note, discussed above, made the economic dimension explicitly clear.

The perceived economic and political benefits were clear motivations for the CEEP. However, the data also suggests that the two motivations were mutually supportive. It

has been suggested for example that the economic benefit was a means of cultivating legitimacy for the broader, political foreign policy of the Flemish Government;

From the operation of the programme, and the specific methods of cooperation emphasized by its rules and regulations, it can be deduced that tapping into international opportunities for Flemish organizations and businesses created a domestic support for a Flemish international policy and can probably be deduced as an implicit objective of the programme in Central and Eastern Europe. This can be inferred from the obligation to involve a Flemish [civil society] partners alongside the [government] promoter [author's translation] (Departement internationaal Vlaanderen, 2009: 19).

The attempt to cultivate domestic support for the international activities can be more than inferred to explain the method of delivery chosen for the project. According to civil servants responsible for the design of the programme, it was a deliberate and political decision by the government to involve Flemish organizations. As a senior civil servant recalls;

I think my government at the time thought that by engaging all these kinds of intermediate organizations [from Flanders], they would offer quite a platform of support for Flemish international action... So by engaging and inviting all these, it was now and then about provinces or local authorities, schools, trade unions, companies, employers' associations, so the living forces of society were engaged and participating in the programme which gave the programme in itself quite some social support. From that perspective, the Flemish government's international policy was very well supported by society. Maybe not by individuals but by society, and there was quite some consensus about the meaning, and the objectives, and the profits that it would make over time to this part of the world.^{xv}

The activity itself, through its design and implementation, was simultaneously constructing its own legitimacy, and legitimacy for the broader notion of Flanders as an international actor. Economic legitimacy was combined with the political goal of inserting Flanders more generally onto the international stage. These notions were mutually supportive and the government certainly recognized both economic and political benefits.

The Flemish Government was also not simply constructing legitimacy through discourse; talking of the notion of Flanders as an international actor to a passive domestic audience. Rather, the CEEP went further and 'made' the domestic audience the

very agents of that activity. An arguably more direct means of constructing the notion of, and legitimacy for Flanders as an international actor; 'constructing through action'.

The reform of the programme in 2001 further clarified the objectives of what was also becoming an increasingly coordinated and centrally managed programme. The political lead moved toward prioritising the economic benefit, leaving the political or democratic component of the CEEP to increasingly emulate the EU norms. Supporting the accession process in the partner countries became a focal point for planners not only because of the benefit to the partners seeking EU membership, but also as it was deemed that their membership 'offers opportunities for Flanders to weigh more heavily on the European agenda in future' (Nota aan de Vlaamse regering: 2001: 11 cited in Vanden Berghe, Van Alstein and Neeb, 2004: 14). The programme had been identified by the Government itself as a means of becoming not only an internationally acceptable partner, but one of a specific kind; an internationally acceptable European partner; a more specific 'insertion' onto the international stage. The influence of the broader, continental norms and objectives are a clear influence at the reform phase of the programme.

4.2.6 Concluding remarks

The CEEP was political paradiplomacy, a project which saw international cooperation for democracy and economic reform in another country as a means of inserting Flanders as an acceptable international actor. It was also an opportunity for the government to project particular values – aligning explicitly with both the EU and the great liberal internationalist causes of the age. This was coupled with the strategic coordination across departments to ensure benefit for both the partner state's, as well as Flanders' economy. Ingrained in this project are both democracy promotion programmes as well as a very particular understanding of the role of 'democracy' as a means of ensuring political stability and healthy economic conditions.

Nonetheless, the actual assistance offered is rather distinctive in early phases, with a focus upon social dialogue and *overleg*; what Flemish practitioners perceive as something they 'do well'. It is the adoption of global norms and practices, specifically the EU's criteria for programme selection and evaluation, that erodes or diminishes the space for a distinctive, 'Flemish' focus within the democracy assistance.

With regard to opportunity structures the *generous constitutional empowerment* of Flanders as an international actor in a variety of fields created opportunities for a Flemish government. The willingness of the *Central and Eastern European partners* to engage, and the dampening of the *security context* were also key global factors facilitating the programme. Agency meanwhile came from an ambitious CD&V government seeking to insert Flanders immediately after the 1993 reforms.

4.3 Bilateral relations: the case of Chile

Luc Van den Brande's post-93 government also established two, long-lasting bilateral partnerships involving development and governance support. This section explores relations with post-Pinochet Chile.

The partnership was based upon a bilateral treaty with Chile, signed in October 1995, after the demise of the Pinochet regime (Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, 2005: 3). Much like the original conception of the CEEP, it can be seen as a general assistance programme involving technical and scientific exchanges or specific support in fields such as education which also involves the support of democracy. Given the much smaller budget, the evaluation and monitoring demands were lower. The programme of projects was developed from initial visits by Flemish staff and politicians and in consultation with Chilean officials. Though wide ranging, the programme included explicit programmes designed to support the development and sustainability of democracy in Chile.

The particular global circumstances and turns of fate also serve as a facilitating context for the initiation and nature of the cooperation. The fall of Pinochet's military dictatorship of Chile coincides with the constitutional reform process in Belgium culminating in the 1993 agreement bestowing upon the federated entities the rights to conclude treaties and send representations, creating the opportunity for bilateral relations. Concurrently, the demise of the bipolar geostrategic context in the early 1990s served to dampen the security context and depoliticise much of the extra-functional international relations of states and sub-states. As a senior civil servant

The time in which Flemish international policy was set-up or born is a very special one. It is the early 90s, we've had the collapse of the Soviet Union on the one hand, we've had Southern Africa being freed from Apartheid in the same period; we've had the transition from Pinochet Chile towards democracy almost the same time. And this new Flemish government acquiring new competences and given the, I don't know how many state reforms, decided to go international. Whether they looked East or South in the world, this was so prominently on the international agenda that the Flemish government engaged these kinds of big transitions that took place. And if you would grab the policy notes from these years, you would read that support for young democracies is an objective that is often repeated and articulated quite explicitly. Be it in Europe, Africa, Latin America or whatever, thematically it was important at the time.^{xvi}

4.3.1 Democracy Promotion

The democracy assistance programmes attempted to develop the links between governance structures and society, with a separate and specific emphasis on the indigenous, Mapuche communities in Chile. Once again, we may note an emphasis on the concept of *overleg*, and upon fostering social inclusion and mediation between society and the governance structures. It must be noted however that the Chile partnership received nowhere near the expenditure or scrutiny of the CEEP. This contributed to the largely free hand which Flemish staff enjoyed.

The decision to emphasize social inclusion was a deliberate one, aimed to combat the perceived excesses of the neoliberal governance model imposed during the military dictatorship. As a senior official of the programme notes;

If you reduce democracy to its procedural and legal and constitutional elements, that's one way to see to it that you have fair and free elections every now and then. It's very important but the whole story is about democratic society. So depending on where you enter in the democracy debate, I think some programmes may have been inspired by this desire to support social inclusion after a period that was, under the General Pinochet, very, very neoliberal. To keep democracy sustainable, I think there is a certain degree of social inclusion that you need to have. So it was about democracy but less explicit. It was explicit in that we would support a young democracy to be sustainable but not that we would think of ourselves as best to learn and to demonstrate how democracy should be organized.^{xvii}

Indeed, the democratic deficit created by the neoliberal governance model is noted as a primary motivating factor for the programme's democracy assistance element. The final report of the partnership states;

During the 17 years of Chile's dictatorship, the government was dedicated to the preservation of the regime through repression and creating a favourable investment climate for foreign companies. The 'policy' was not to do much more. The first democratic governments after 1989 therefore had their hands full with the restoration of civil rights and fostering an economy that, despite everything had fallen into the doldrums [author's translation] (Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, 2005: 27).

Clearly, the approach and thinking behind the particular model or aspects of democracy being promoted were contextualized with regard to the partner in this case.

Nonetheless, Flemish officers recall no clear plan or strategy for the partnership and were largely left to develop the programmes on an *ad hoc* basis, building upon their expertise and the experience derived from visits and negotiations with Chilean officials. Once programmes were decided upon however, there was little if any Flemish governmental opposition or involvement. Indeed, as one officer recalls;

Yes because, let's say on the political side, they gave us *carte blanche* I can say. We still had to go to our minister and to our cabinet and say 'look, these are the projects we want to do' but then we presented the project with all the pros and not too many cons. And then, especially our first minister, Van den Brande, he was of course the one who signed the agreement from '95 to '98, he was very in favour of working together with Chile. He was never opposed to proposals. Then we had quite some money to work with^{xviii}.

The Fundacion Frei's projects, run from 2003-2005, spending Euro101,090, offer an illustration of the type of democracy assistance involved in the partnership. Its goal was to engage in the; 'Capacity building of local actors to achieve better local democracy in Chile, focusing on municipalities with a significant presence of Mapuche communities [author's translation]' (Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, 2005: 27). The project involved the training of local officials and supporting the establishment of public consultation exercises. A key achievement claimed by the project is; 'the creation of communication channels and the 'practice' of basic democratic reflex [author's translation]' (Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, 2005: 27).

Social inclusion, improving the responsiveness of governance structures and a particular focus upon indigenous peoples characterise the nature and focus of the democracy assistance present within the Chile partnership. Encouraging *overleg* and an attempt at fostering the basic democratic reflex involving consultation and mediation between governance structures and society represent a deliberate attempt on behalf of Flemish officials to undo the perceived damage inflicted by the imposition of a repressive, neoliberal regime.

Flanders' assistance to democracy was of a particular kind; with the emphasis again on *overleg* and social dialogue, and an attempt to pull the partner back from what was deemed the excesses of the neoliberal governance regime.

4.3.2 Motivations

The motivation for the Chile partnership is less clear from the data sourced, and as Criekemans (2010b: 54) notes;

The choice for Chile as a 'bridge head' into Latin America is however quite peculiar. Some observers question whether the "nine criteria" had anything to do with Chile becoming an important Flemish partner.

The relevant criteria would be the prerequisite of the partner's attachment to democracy and human rights (criteria 6); the potential for Flanders to develop solidarity actions with the partner in a meaningful way (criteria 7); and more loosely, the willingness for the partner to recognize Flanders as a fully-fledged partner (criteria 9).

Project officers of the time however emphasise the moral obligation to assist countries such as Chile as a motivation, particularly at that specific time; shortly after the fall of the military dictatorship and as the Chileans attempted to reinstate their democratic institutions and practices.^{xix} Many interviewees also emphasized cultural and personal contacts between the two partners.^{xx} Following the coup in 1973, many Chileans emigrated, thousands to settle in Belgian and Flemish cities such as Antwerp. Their involvement with the Christian Democrats over the following decades would result in a host of personal contacts between politicians who would, by the early 1990s, come to govern in the Flemish and new Chilean governments (see Hendrickx 2004: 31). Indeed

several members of the post-Pinochet government, as many as eight to the recollection of some,^{xxi} were graduates of Flemish Universities. Other coincidental events such as the presence and coverage by Flemish journalist Maurice De Wilde, of the coup in 1973 raised the profile of Chile within Flanders.^{xxii} These connections are offered as the facilitating basis of the relationship and are explicitly referred to in the Government's official report and justification of the Chile-Flanders partnership (Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, 2005: 10).

In inserting itself onto the world stage, assisting the liberal revolutions in South Africa and Chile provided a means of both being involved in the key countries during the 1990s, and to align with similar values and concerns, and portraying Flanders as an actor of a specific, liberal kind. Commitment to democratic advancement was, after all, an explicit criteria of partnership and, for cabinet members of the time, a 'prerequisite for cooperation'.^{xxiii} Indeed, in all three major bilateral programmes, all of which grew in scope and size with time, the targets were all 'hot' during the 1990s; post-soviet Central and Eastern Europe, South Africa and Chile. As a project officer recalls;

I think they wanted to make a very strong statement because the two, especially from '95 to 2000 and something, the two countries we were working together the most were Chile and South Africa. Both countries, one with Apartheid, Chile with a military dictatorship, so they were very, very young democracies and I think this was really an opportunity. Or let's say, the Flemish government decided we have to help these democracies to develop into more mature countries with all the things that are for us, very normal. With all the being a state that's working good, where citizens can feel safe and to be a more prosperous country. I think there was a really big... moral obligation.^{xxiv}

What better demonstrations of such a commitment to these globally great liberal internationalist causes that by assisting the transitions of Chile, South Africa and post-soviet Europe? Inserting a specific, liberal-democratic Flanders onto the international stage, it could be argued, proved an important motivation and objective that the explicit criteria for bilateral relations and economic cooperation laid down originally. The democracy promoted however was neither evaluated nor monitored closely. The existence of the partnership itself appeared to satisfy government officials and political leaders. The specific governance support meanwhile was of a particular kind, again stressing the concept of *overleg* and social inclusion, particularly of excluded groups.

The *constitutional set-up* again acts as a key opportunity structure, and the willingness of *global partners* to engage bilaterally with Flanders further facilitated the endeavour. It could be argued that the global, liberal internationalist zeitgeist influenced the nature of the Flemish cooperation, focussed as it was on themes of democracy and development. The Flemish government, again the CD&V immediately after the 1993 reforms, wielded the key agency that initiated the partnership. This was an agency and determination to initiate a relationship that was not echoed by later governments, even nationalist, whose political input and lead for the partnership was at most, minimal.

4.4 Development Cooperation: South Africa, Malawi and Mozambique

Flemish development assistance has its roots in the bilateral relationship established with South Africa following the collapse of the apartheid regime. However, following on from the Hermes agreement of April 2000, the Belgian Regions received a measure of competence and associated budget for overseas development assistance. The NVA's Geert Bourgeois held the governmental portfolio at the time of the transfer of competence, and selected the countries of Mozambique and Malawi as partners. By 2006 the Flemish International Cooperation Agency (FICA) had been established, an arms-length delivery body which was later incorporated into the Department for Foreign Affairs under the 2014-19 government. The constitutional empowerment built on the freedom to conclude treaties with other states, and the FICA become the key agency directing and developing the projects. These emerge as key opportunity structures facilitating and conditioning the Flemish development cooperation.

It is argued in this section that, since the early period, in the absence of a political lead beyond the selection of partners, FICA have deliberately emulated the international development industry in their objectives, norms, and practices. Flanders has become a development donor just like any other.

4.4.1 Choosing partners; 'it's a political decision'

The selection of partners as the partnerships were being set up was a functional one, in line with the international practice of targeting least developed countries (LDCs). The

decision not to select the Congo or the Great Lakes region – which given Belgium’s legacy, was a potential alternative – can also be seen as a practical one due to the perceived potential challenges of the volatile political context of the region. As a senior civil servant claims; ‘I think we would be fooled around with constantly because the situation is that complex, we would not understand’.^{xxv}

However there is also a political element to the decision. This is admitted by department staff and development practitioners. In not selecting the Congo, the Flemish government was distancing itself from both the Belgian Federal Government (which is very active in the region) and the colonial legacy. As one long serving civil servant explains;

Congo has always been a Belgian colony. We do not look at ourselves as being as Belgian as the Belgium government... It was about the Catholic church, it was about French-speaking '*haute finance*' of this country engaging in its economic agenda, it was partly the story of our Monarchy. These things, they live in our collective memories but to draw an agenda for now? As a new and emerging micro-donor? Why the hell would we say 'let's start in Congo?'^{xxvi}

Or in a FICA staff member’s more candid assessment; ‘it’s a political decision’.^{xxvii} This distancing and differentiation also contributed to the department's other explicit objective of 'putting Flanders on the map'. Using development assistance to differentiate Flemish activity from that of the Belgian Federal government is an attractive strategy for the nationalist party particularly. One N-VA government advisor suggests;

[Federal development assistance is concentrated in] ...Rwanda and yes Great Lakes which are in fact francophone countries. But that’s traditional Belgian, or Federal development policy. And then you have the Flemish development policy which is more focused on Southern Africa. Maybe no coincidence that you want to have a counterweight, in countries which are Anglophone, or to shift the focus away from this traditional Central African development policy.^{xxviii}

It could also be argued that the ability of sub-states to differentiate themselves and locate assistance in other territories has a potentially normative dimension. As one civil servant suggests;

Some rather political, historically connected sentiments that make it the wise thing to say let us go to the Southern Part which is more easy, take a fresh start from zero, in Malawi they have not ever heard from us before.^{xxix}

Flanders, due to its distinctiveness, or at least its difference from Belgium, has in Flemish officials' eyes been at least somewhat able to detach itself and its assistance from a political past and a colonial legacy which can form a complicating and obstructive basis for development assistance. Kincaid's claim of sub-states' ability to engage more effectively in politically sensitive contexts may be worth recalling in this instance (Kincaid, 2010: 27), although the reason for doing so is more solipsistic, or self-centred.

4.4.2 FICA

During the post-2000 period where Flanders held competence in the field of providing international development assistance, policy has technically been the responsibility of the Foreign Affairs department (DiV or Internationaal Vlaanderen at various times). Its implementation meanwhile has been the responsibility of FICA since its establishment in 2006. Nonetheless, in practice, FICA would be tasked with the actual drawing up of the broad strategy for international cooperation in relation to the policy notes provided by the minister. The department would then attain approval from the minister before engaging in its delivery, as well as preparing the more specific development assistance strategies for individual countries; the Country Strategy Papers (CSP). Flemish government involvement in the development of the strategy has been very rare and approval for FICA's proposals always forthcoming. In practice therefore, FICA has played *the* key role in designing, developing and implementing international development policy since 2006.

Established in April 2006 as a government funded intermediate organization, FICA was located between the department and the deliverers of assistance, with a complement of around 29 members of staff.^{xxx} Following a reorganization of the foreign affairs department in 2014 however, the agency was incorporated into the government department and directly accountable to the minister. Staff members however have remained within the same division of the department, many of whom have professional backgrounds with NGOs and the broader development assistance industry.^{xxxi}

The five duties of FICA are;

1. bilateral cooperation with partners in the South
2. support to activities and actions of indirect actors
3. cooperation actions via multilateral organisations
4. enhanced public support and awareness raising
5. emergency relief and humanitarian aid

(FICA, 2012: 5)

Development assistance is provided through bilateral support programmes, support to indirect actors and through multilateral organizations. The direct and indirect bilateral cooperation accounts for between Euro9-12m of annual expenditure from 2006-2013 (DiV, 2006; 2007; 2008; 2009; Internationaal Vlaanderen, 2010; 2011; 2012; Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs, 2014: 10). Bi-multi assistance (Flemish funding for specific ILO or UNESCO projects in the partner countries through trust funds) accounts for a further Euro12.5m by 2013, although this strategy of funding Flemish involvement with multilateral organizations such as the ILO is a recent development.^{xxxii} Multilateral expenditure varies widely from Euro1.5m to almost Euro12m annually due to the expenditure often being counted within the 'bi-multi' line. The agency is also responsible for raising awareness of development assistance in the 'North' (mainly in Flanders) as well as coordinating the provision of emergency relief and humanitarian aid (FICA, 2012: 5). Overall, ODA expenditure plateaued at around Euro50m by 2009-2012. This represents a notable increase from the Euro8.2m budget in 1995 for the South African and Chilean partnerships (Verbeke and Waeterloos, 2010: 7).

Most interesting is the success achieved by FICA in protecting their budget, particularly during a period of budgetary austerity. It has already scored a success in the symbolic adoption of the 0.7% of GDP expenditure goal, the global norm regarding the amount for a state to be spending on international development aid. The avoidance of cuts to its budget, even as the bilateral and CEEP programmes were being wound down, suggests that the activity itself is valued above bilateral relations or other international activity. The justification offered often has a moral tone and portrays international development

as a particularly valuable activity. One civil servant suggests that domestic public opinion values the activity more than other kinds;

...I think a big factor is that public opinion values more development cooperation because it comes more in the news and it's morally higher than bilateral relations. Development cooperation is 'helping poor people' or 'helping poor states and countries', 'helping to get them better'. Bilateral relations no. But the funny thing is, in our bilateral relations with Chile, one of the big issues has been to work with the groups with the most problems. But it's not conceived like that by the public opinion because they don't know that.^{xxxiii}

Political forces concurred with the moral virtue of involvement with a great liberal cause such as international development. A former government advisor suggested it was a symbol of Flanders' solidarity and its attempt to meet its explicitly stated foreign policy goals, and to cut such assistance would undermine the symbolic value of the activity;

Yeah, that's also a symbol of solidarity. In the past we always said we should spend 0.7% of our budget to development policy. We didn't reach that, it was part of that. If we now would cut back on that part of a goal we did not even reach, if we would go back on that; that would give a bad impression... So it's a matter of solidarity, symbolic also. You cannot afford yourself to cut your solidarity with the so called third world, or the developing world.^{xxxiv}

FICA, though technically subordinate to the government department and minister, has led the government's international development policy. Development as an activity is firmly established, understood, and protected as a moral or altruistic endeavour, though this understanding is based on popular conceptions. Key norms such as the 0.7% GDP expenditure have been institutionalized and political influenced minimized. In its role as the institution guiding and developing policy and practice, isolated from much political involvement, it has looked to the development industry in order to adopt and emulate norms and practices of a 'good development practitioner'. The details of this emulation is explored in the following sections that focus on the Country Strategy Papers, and the specific democracy or governance projects. It is argued that FICA has coordinated the way in which Flanders understands, and 'does' international development.

4.4.3 Country Strategy Papers (CSP)

CSPs are designed every four years (2008-2012 and 2012-2016). They are the broad policy framework for the projects in specific partner countries and are in theory developed alongside the government of the partner country who provide FICA with the information regarding the country and nature of programmes required. The advantage for Flanders is a lighter workload and less need to identify areas for assistance – the partner supplies this. However in practice, this may not always prove possible as the capacity of the partner may be lacking.^{xxxv}

Closer examination of the CSPs and the related work in the partner countries reveals a determination on behalf of FICA to emulate and adhere to the norms and practices of the wider development assistance community. Explicitly stated on the department's website is its determination to ground Flanders' development assistance in global practices and norms;

In order to be a modern and reliable donor, it is essential that the Flemish policy regarding development cooperation is aligned with the international development agenda. In the partner countries, attention is devoted to the political, economic and social developments. Internationally, the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs keeps track of the specialist conferences, in particular those regarding aid effectiveness (Paris 2005, Accra 2008), the financing for development and the Millennium Development Goals. The developments within the region of Southern African (SADC) are also closely monitored. The Cotonou Agreement, the EU-Africa Strategy and the EPAs that are being negotiated between the EU and the Southern African Regions (SADC) deserve special attention in this respect. The large themes from the international trade policy (Doha Development Round, Aid for Trade, market access) are often oriented to increasing the capacity of enterprise in the South. Harmonisation with initiatives regarding international enterprise is also important in this context.

The Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs (DiV) keeps track of international trends and developments in the field of development cooperation and translates them into useful policy recommendations.

(Flanders Department of Foreign Affairs Website, 2015)

The determination to emulate the global practices and norms is also openly admitted by the departmental staff responsible for developing the strategies;

...we have tried to live up to the standards as set by the international community, be it first the Paris declaration or whatever was following. Trying to comply to the standards of the international community for member states. And that's how we operated.^{xxxvi}

FICA's annual reports also consistently reiterate the agency's determination to emulate norms and practices such as contributing to the realisation of the MDGs and 'an efficient implementation of international cooperation and to that end applies the international consensus on good donor practice' (Flanders International Cooperation Agency, 2012: 7). Put in a broader perspective, Flanders' policy is to fully align its international cooperation programmes with the development cooperation policy of the EU.

More specifically the CSPs anchor its development policy to the key principles, practices and goals of the European development community;

3.1. Principles of cooperation: Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action

Flanders' programme of cooperation with South Africa aims to contribute to the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals in South Africa and to align with the Medium-Term Strategic Framework 2009-2014 of the South African Government. Both governments commit themselves to undertake their cooperation within the framework of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), the Accra Agenda of Action (2008) and the Fourth High Level Forum in Busan (South Korea, 2011).

(Internationaal Vlaanderen, [no dateA]: 14)

Regular reviews of the implementation of development cooperation in partner countries form the basis for further development and improvement of the programmes. The Joint Medium Term Review of the programmes in Malawi declares that it...

...was also conducted in view of the Principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid effectiveness: ownership, alignment, harmonisation mutual responsibility and result-based management (Internationaal Vlaanderen, 2012b: 7).

Progress in aligning Flemish assistance with the Paris Declaration for example are utilized as a specific indication of the overall success of the partnerships;

3.3 Progress with regard to the Paris Declaration

...out of 12 indicators, Malawi met five and made progress on four indicators. Performance on alignment has been generally good while progress on harmonisation has been limited (Internationaal Vlaanderen, 2012b: 10).

The Declaration has even provided the reasoning and the means by which specific programmes are selected and commissioned. Mechanisms to improve the accountability and governance such as the Aid Management Policy; Debt and Aid Division; Aid Management Platform; and Public Sector Investment Programme, were all implemented as a part of the Malawi Government's framework for the Declaration of Paris and to improve compliance and alignment with the Paris agenda (Internationaal Vlaanderen, 2012b: 10). Key pillars of the global development community, its practices and norms such as the Paris Declaration, the MDGs or the Accra agenda are consistently utilized as yardsticks by which Flanders measures and defines the success of its assistance.

Likewise, with regard to the pulling of funding or even attaching a 'negative linkage' to the assistance, Flanders again looks to the industry. While funding has been postponed and redirected into 'neutral' accounts to protect from corruption, no funding has, as of yet, been pulled from partners. However, democratic and human rights concerns have sparked consideration of such action, as a senior FICA official claims;

There have been discussions for instance in Mozambique...the last elections, there have been lots of problems with the results, these elections there are problems again but the last elections and there have been lots of talks with the Embassy because one of the smaller parties, I think the MBM have been complaining that the elections have not been free and fair.^{xxxvii}

However, FICA turn to global actors in development for the lead with regard to pulling funding – specifically the EU. The same FICA official stated;

The EU has been coordinating the reactions of the donors in Malawi and there the decision was not to pull back so we haven't pulled back, we decided not to do it. If the EU would have done it, then we would have stopped our aid as well.^{xxxviii}

With regard to development policy therefore, there has been a deliberate and explicit attempt to fully integrate into the "industry" and its norms and practices.

4.4.4 Good Governance and Democracy

Democracy occupies an important role in the CSPs' stated aims; '...it is the Flemish Government's ambition to contribute to a prosperous and democratic world through its partnerships' (Flemish Government, [no dateC]: 12). Indeed, civil servants^{xxxix} and politicians claim that a commitment to democracy is a necessary precursor to the receipt of Flemish assistance; 'We would never have given something when it was not coupled with respect for human rights and democracy'.^{xl}

As a measure of its role within the entire assistance package, between 12-18% of FICA's budget is spent on governance related projects annually (Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs, 2014: 16). Democracy and more specifically, good governance also occupies an important and explicit position in the strategy and is understood as the means of facilitating the implementation of broader development programmes;

Good governance is central to the successful implementation of projects and programmes. It entails proper management of public finances, better service delivery, mutual accountability and the participation of the beneficiaries in delivery processes. *Capacity building* will have to be dealt with in all initiatives, benefiting all stakeholders involved in the implementation, including programme management teams, service providers and final beneficiaries (Flemish Government, [no dateA]: 17).

The types of democracy or governance programmes that are commissioned often aim to facilitate the implementation of broader development programmes as seen with the South Africa Provincial Legislatures Support Programme which ran from 2009-2011.

The South Africa Provincial Legislatures (SAPL) Programme is a capacity building program with nine provincial governments regarding their legislative duties, government structure and their function as representatives of the people. The focus is on assisting the provincial government in the institutionalization of a gender agenda and to develop HIV-AIDS policy and also focuses one on strengthening cooperation between local and provincial governments, and the training of provincial legislature members, chief whips and staff working on legislation and financial management [author's translation] (Internationaal Vlaanderen, 2011: 33).

Receiving a subsidy of Euro300,000 from the outset and a further Euro120,000 in 2011, the EU's Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa (AWEPA) were commissioned to implement the programme.

However, more explicit and specifically governance-only programmes are also funded, such as the Local Governance Policy Unit which operated in the Free State for a decade which involved; ‘Capacity building for municipalities in the Free State by educating councillors and managers with the aim of improving the management and development of their territory’ [author’s translation] (Internationaal Vlaanderen, 2011: 33).

FICA also co-funds more explicit democracy promotion vehicles such as the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (PMG) operating in South Africa on four-year funding cycles. Established in 1995 as a partnership between Black Sash, the Human Rights Committee and the Institute for Democracy, the organization (an NGO since 2009) provides a range of monitoring services.

- PMG aims promote the link between government and civil society organisations so that disadvantaged people on the ground are made aware of the programmes available to them.
- Government officials and their political heads recognise “accountability as a norm” in the implementation of their programmes for small enterprise development, sustainable smallholder agriculture and food security.
- PMG aims to provide a link in the provincial-national chain with National Treasury at the helm.

(Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2012: 2)

The PMG is a far more explicit programme for supporting and developing South African democracy than the less explicit good governance schemes aimed to facilitate other initiatives. Notably, it could be understood as an agency which looks to develop the consultation, cooperation and connections between government, provincial or regional government and civil society – an attempt at developing *overleg* in South Africa.

Digging a little deeper however, attention could also be drawn to the particular focus of the attempts at promoting *overleg* and its seeming targeting of the specific link between government and businesses in particular – especially small enterprises and the smallholder agriculture sector. The National Assembly Committees which the PMG proposes to monitor with the funding from FICA are Agriculture; Economic Development; Trade and Industry; Rural Development and Land Reform; as well as the provincial Land and Environment and Economic Development committees. If the

overleg is developed anywhere, it is in relation to business and the governance structures.

In comparison to South Africa however, which is understood by the Flemish government to be more developed, the development programmes in Malawi and Mozambique, both LDCs, are more elementary in nature. The CSPs here acknowledge the central role governance plays in the facilitation and implementation of development programmes and corruption and governance issues are identified as key challenges in the countries (Internationaal Vlaanderen, [no dateB]: 8). The strategy focuses programming on support for the agriculture sector and food security but acknowledges the need to place emphasis on governance issues within those sectors;

Within the frame of Malawi's development priorities and the support to the agricultural and food security sector, major emphasis will be put on gender, climate change and good governance in the 2014-2018 programmes, as recommended in the Joint Mid-term Review on development cooperation between Malawi and Flanders (Internationaal Vlaanderen, [no dateB]: 23).

As FICA staff suggest, governance and human rights programmes are conducted in order to support the implementation of development programmes in the agriculture and food sectors. Governance is considered 'transversal issue' alongside gender and climate change. For example;

Governance is a transversal issue... I think because we are working with and paying the salaries of those technical assistants which are involved in the health sectors so we contribute to governance but that is at the administrative level. Then there is the issue of human rights. Last year [2013] our government funded a seminar in Malawi on economic, cultural and social rights in Southern Africa, with the focus on food security. So the seminar was dealing with the issue of the right to food.^{xli}

Governance and democracy has come to occupy an important part of Flemish development assistance, fully integrated into the global industry. There is little discernible difference or distinctiveness within Flanders' development assistance compared to other state donors in the field. Flanders is largely, just another donor.

4.4.5 Human Rights

The Flemish Government also claims it has;

...the ambition to integrate human rights as a cross-cutting theme in its international relations. This shows Flanders' commitment to being a solidarity-based federated state, within as well as beyond its borders... Better respect of human rights by all states contributes to the development of a more democratic, more peaceful and safer international order. (Flanders Department of Foreign Affairs, 2015a).

Clearly viewing the promotion of rights through a liberal lens, the Flemish Government promotes and supports human rights with the explicit intention of supporting the infrastructure of democracy in partner states. The conceptualization of human rights can be discerned from the Government's policy document intended to inform and guide the development of programmes. Four themes form the core of this policy; respect for the physical integrity of people; anti-discrimination; the rights of children; and the right to decent work (Departement Internationaal Vlaanderen, 2015: 22).

Again, international conventions and what may be termed pillars of global human rights policy are consistent reference points for Flemish human rights policy. The UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as Flanders' own Action Plan on the Rights of the Child (itself developed in reference to the UN Convention), explicitly anchor the approach to promoting child rights (Departement internationaal Vlaanderen, 2015: 26). The Government emphasizes the activities that are in-line with its stated policy and the global conventions and norms such as it attempts at '...urging partner countries to ratify and convert the international acquis in the area of the rights of the child' (Departement internationaal Vlaanderen, 2015: 25). Not only does Flanders emulate the norms of the global human rights community, but it then actively propagates them.

There is also a focus within the policy upon the rights of indigenous and non-sedentary peoples for example, echoes a similar approach evident within Flanders' bilateral programme with Chile. However, even this specific focus defers to the European Commission with regard to constructing policy;

In line with the ten fundamental community principles on the integration of the Roma (European Roma platform, 2009) and as part of the "national strategy for the integration of the Roma" as requested by the European Commission, the Government of Flanders has drawn up an action plan for Central and Eastern European (Roma) migrants (Departement internationaal Vlaanderen, 2015: 25).

The activities engaged in to support and promote human rights are cross-cut into broader development cooperation such as the promotion of gender rights alongside healthcare development programmes or even specific programmes such as the 'Forum Muhler' run project to improve the human rights and gender situation in Mozambique. The project aims to;

- improve the quality of provision of services to victims of domestic violence against women by monitoring the implementation of the law on this subject
- improve female rights, more specifically women's right on safe abortion
- reinforce the organisation in the field of monitoring and evaluation

(Flanders Department of Foreign Affairs, 2015b)

FICA has played a central and key role in developing Flemish international development policy and practice. It has done so without political lead or interference beyond the selection of partners. In doing so, it has adopted the norms and practices of the international development industry. The CSPs and specific projects take a lead from international guidance, while governance and human rights, also based on international definitions and practices, have emerged as integral, cross-cutting elements of Flanders' development programmes. Flanders has deliberately aligned its international development programme to global industry norms, practices, and standards. In turn it has institutionalized and become a practitioner and propagator of those global development norms.

Clearly the devolution of competence for international development was a key opportunity structure allowing the Flemish government to engage in the activity. But global development norms, FICA, and its emulation of those norms and practices go a long way to explaining how the activity was conducted. The Flemish government is the key agent in initiating the activity meanwhile, but FICA's management is also crucial in understanding its development from that initial decision.

4.5 Conclusions

4.5.1 Opportunity structures of Flemish democracy promotion

Drawing on the Lecourian framework, this section will summarise the opportunity structures and their relationship with promoting democracy in the Flemish case. The revised framework posits eleven key variables that work so as to construct opportunities for agency at the sub-state level. This section will discuss the opportunity structures. The latter sub-section addresses the agency of successive Flemish governments, arguing that the nationalist party was not the source of the agency behind Flemish democracy promotion.

While there was some pre-existing association with Chile, there was nothing that marked the *domestic political context* as one that structured incentives or opportunities to engage in the promotion of democracy abroad. While the nationalist NVA has come to dominate Flemish politics since the mid-2000s, its dominance has not been accompanied by a focus within political debate upon democracy promotion, or even international affairs more generally.

The *powers and institutional capacity* of the Flemish government proved crucial however. Whether by use of its block budget to allocate substantial funding to the CEEP, restructuring departments to serve the management of international affairs, or the establishment of FICA, Flanders has shown itself able to resource and sustain substantial international activities.

The *constitutional definition of competence* makes Flanders the legitimate actor in international affairs in the devolved fields. Consequently, Flanders is obligated to engage internationally in the realm of international development, and has the legal basis for developing democracy promotion programmes such as the CEEP or within its bilateral relations. After all, ‘...Belgian constituent units enjoy fully legitimate and legal direct access to the international stage’ (Bursens and Massart-Pierard, 2009: 97). Along with the institutional capacity, this opportunity structure is key in creating opportunities for Flanders’ government to engage in the promotion of democracy abroad.

Interestingly, due to the government's decision to initiate its democracy programmes as Flanders, not as a part of Belgium, the *intergovernmental relations* or its *representation within state foreign policy* were not relevant for structuring opportunities. They did not either however, prove a means by which the central state could restrict or halt the Flemish government from engaging in its democracy activities, nor influence their nature. It should be noted however that Flemish activities did not run against *Belgian foreign policy*.

Supra-national political and/or economic institutions and *international organizations* played only a limited role, much later in the lifespan of the CEEP. Norms and practices were emulated or adopted from the EU's democracy programmes following a reform in the early 2000s. Much like involvement as part of Belgium, any involvement with EU programmes would diminish the CEEP's capacity to simultaneously 'put Flanders on the map', and Flemish distinctiveness would be less explicit.

Naturally, the willingness of Flanders' *partners* to cooperate, sometimes explicitly for the development of democracy, has been key in creating opportunities for democracy promotion. Importantly also is the particular time-period, during the dampened security context of the liberal revolutions in the 1990s, within which the partners opened themselves to Flanders. Indeed, the Flemish government freely admit to the global security context being key in their own literature (Departement internationaal Vlaanderen, 2009: 20). This could be contrasted perhaps with the vexed security context surrounding the Arab Spring, and notable reluctance from Flemish governments to engage in the region during the late 2000s.

The transnational communication of global industry norms proved important in the post-reformed CEEP as officials aligned its projects to established democracy promotion practices. But it is in the field of international development that the adoption, emulation, and propagation of industry norms and practices has proved particularly marked. They are key to understanding how Flanders engages in international development.

For Flanders' promotion of democracy, it is evident that the capacity of Flanders to engage abroad and its constitutional imperative to do so are key opportunity structures for its government. The norms and practices of the development industry proved

important also in understanding how democracy is promoted more implicitly through Flanders' development work. Meanwhile, the global political context is acknowledged as a key facilitating factor for partners to engage with Flanders, and in democracy related activities.

4.5.2 Agency

The key political agency in the Flemish case can be clearly identified as the successive governments of Flanders. However, the international agency fluctuates. There was clearly a period of intense activity and effort to define the international role of Flanders, its policy, and establish its activities soon after the 1993 reforms. The desire to 'put Flanders on the map' emerges as a consistent and explicit motivation for engaging in the democracy promotion activities. With the exception of official development assistance, the key foreign activities beyond economic paradiplomacy were initiated by the Van den Brande government. The later governments of Flanders did not attempt to develop similar projects. The CD&V led government of Luc Van den Brande defined and set the path for Flemish foreign policy. Even after the devolution of competence for international development, beyond partner selection, the policy and practice was left to FICA. Without a political lead, it looked to the global industry as it emulated, practiced, and propagated common, global norms and practices.

The broad principles of Flemish foreign policy have remained largely untouched. The data suggests that international activities are not high on the domestic political agenda, and there have not been major efforts to diverge from Van den Brande's core strategic objectives. Nor has the domestic political context given any impetus or compulsion to develop or even discuss international activities, despite the frequent presence of a nationalist party in government.

The instrumental agency in the Flemish case was the Van den Brande government during the period following the constitutional reforms and effective creation of the modern Flemish sub-state in 1993. The government at the time pursued and institutionalized an explicit strategy of inserting Flanders onto the global stage. The CEEP had clear economic advantages, while the early Chilean and South African partnerships had a moral grounding, but these activities, engaging in the great liberal

internationalist causes of the age, had clear and acknowledged domestic benefits for the government in constructing, defining, and institutionalizing Flanders' international identity and actorness.

4.5.3 Understanding the democracy promotion of Flanders

In the Flemish case there are instances of explicit attempts to promote democracy abroad, most notably through the CEEP, by supporting Chile's transition, and more implicitly through its international development programme. While partly an attempt to support the democratic transition in Central and Eastern Europe, the CEEP is also an explicit attempt to establish market and economic ties with partners. The CEEP can also, along with the Chile and development partnerships, be seen as attempts to 'put Flanders' on the map. This included not only the linking of companies and the markets but also the governance of those markets and the broader economic thinking. More importantly, particularly in selecting the liberal internationalist causes of the age – supporting post-Pinochet Chile and engaging in international development – Flanders has attempted to insert a particular notion of Flanders onto the map. Indeed the CEEP, it is argued, was a means of constructing an international character and garnering domestic support for the notion of Flanders' place on the international 'stage' or of 'putting Flanders on the map'.

The CEEP, as with the bilateral relations, was initiated during a very early, formative period of Flanders' post-1993 existence. With time however, political lead and interest evaporated, while management of programmes drifted toward the EU and industry norms and standards until finally the programme came to an end. In adopting those norms and practices however, project selection criteria, and evaluation methods and indices for the CEEP, the distinctly and perhaps 'organically' Flemish approach to the activities are dropped. These had been most notable in the form of attempts to develop and operationalise the concept of *overleg* within partner countries. The audience meanwhile, by being made the practitioners of the CEEP, were organizations within Flemish society.

The Chile partnership, facing much less scrutiny than the CEEP, was allowed to pursue its own approaches in an *ad hoc* fashion until its eventual demise. Once more, social

inclusion and *overleg* was present in the activities, but a drift toward European or international institutions, norms, or practices was not witnessed.

The development industry meanwhile is understood as a key factor in explaining how and even where the Flemish development assistance work is conducted. In the absence of a political lead or desire for variation, FICA explicitly sought to emulate the industry practices and adopt its norms which in turn involves the implicit promotion of democracy. Indeed there is little if anything to distinguish Flanders from any other state donor.

Generally, for the most empowered and free-to-act case, a notable shift has taken place toward globally prevalent practices. This shift is reflected in the governance reforms relating to international activities, from the concentrated power of Luc Van den Brande, through a process of departmental verticalization and gradual alignment to and adoption of broader global norms and practices, and finally toward the emerging new government departments such as FICA that explicitly and deliberately aim to ensure that Flanders' engagement is as closely aligned to the industry as possible.

Clearly the constitutional set-up and associated budgetary control for the broad competences of the Flemish government has been very facilitating of Flemish international activity. The global political context of the 1990s is also acknowledged as a key factor in Flanders' ability to develop, in the form of the CEEP, an explicit and independent international cooperation programme that included significant elements of governance and democratic support. Specifically, the demise of the Soviet Union, the dampening of the security context, and the 'opening' of Central and Eastern European societies (and economies), facilitated the foray onto the international stage without the risk of a backlash or responses to their interventions. The stark contrast with the diminishing emphasis on independent and bilateral activity in the second decade of the Flemish government supports the notion that the global political and security context impact the opportunity for independent or bilateral political activity.

The nationalist party however, did not drive the early, and most prominently and independently Flemish activities such as the CEEP or the Chile partnership. The CD&V party at the time was the regional political force concerned with defining Flanders' role

in the world. 'Putting Flanders on the map' was one of the core and earliest priorities of Flemish foreign policy – its (sub-)national interest. The construction of a particular notion of Flemish international actorness is not necessarily the domain of nationalists alone, but rather at least a shared motivation and conditioning factor of Flemish foreign policy.

In understanding Flemish democracy promotion we may note that there is a (sub-)national interest, which is to project Flanders onto the map, particularly during the period after the 1993 reforms. Structurally, there are clear opportunities for the Flemish executive to pursue that (sub-)national interest, particularly within the international political and security context of the 1990s. In doing so, and in attempting to 'put Flanders on the map', the government has attempted to project a particular notion of Flanders, engaging with the great liberal projects of the age – supporting democracy and development in Central and Eastern Europe, post-apartheid South Africa, post-Pinochet Chile, and sub-Saharan LDCs.

The Flemish governments have attempted not only to project Flanders onto the map by engaging in these projects, but to contribute in a distinctive manner, by emphasizing *overleg*. This desire diminished somewhat with time, manifesting itself in a distinctly less enthusiastic view of bilateral activities that are explicitly Flemish in nature. The diminishing political interest in these activities have coincided with the move toward the democracy and development industries for a lead in how and where the activities are conducted.

Chapter 5: Maryland

This second of three case studies explores the democracy promotion activities found in Maryland, US. It will generate data for a comparative analysis and better understanding of sub-state democracy promotion, the basis for answering the third research question. It will begin with an overview of the domestic structures highlighted by the Lecourian framework, followed by an exploration of instances of democracy promotion. It will argue that though devoid of agency in political matters, and not understood as a democracy promotion actor, Maryland nonetheless acts as an opportunity structure for broader democracy organizations that subcontract its officials and knowledge in service of broader democracy promotion programmes.

5.1.1 USA

Though inhabited for 15,000 years and colonized by European powers using African slave labour for almost 300 years, it was not until the late 18th century that the North American continent could claim a globally accepted independent nation state. After a war of independence rejecting British monarchical and aristocratic rule, thirteen colonies – what would become the founding states – declared independence and formed the United States of America. Following the revolution and during the 19th Century particularly, the United States' expansion westward to the Pacific coast involved the incorporation of former French, Mexican, Texan, Spanish, more British, and American Indian territories which would in turn become US states. By the turn of the 20th Century, 45 states had been admitted and a further 5 by 1959, including the only two without a land border with another US state; Alaska and Hawaii. The rapid economic and demographic growth of the US and the states during the latter half of the 19th and early 20th Centuries have strong links with the territorial expansion, immigration from Europe, and mainly African slave labour. From its origins, states have played a key role in the constitutional and international history of the country. The domestic and extra-domestic development and growth of the United States is intimately tied with the states. US States predate and themselves formed the centralized, federal government as opposed to the federal or central government devolving a constitutional existence to the states.

Throughout its history however, the relationship between the federal and state governments has evolved considerably, with the general tendency toward increasing centralization of power. Disputes between federal and state levels over legal and political sovereignty came to a head during the Civil War, when secessionist states were decisively defeated and a more powerful federal level emerged (see McPherson, 1988). Banking institutions and reforms further strengthened the federal government's position, and during the early 20th Century the presidential terms of Franklyn Roosevelt involved the New Deal. The huge federal work and welfare programme in response to the economic depression significantly increased the power of the federal government. Federal grants were channelled to through the state administrations for specific, economy-stimulating ends. Further enlargement of federal programmes during the 1950s and 1960s again increased the federal government's domestic power, however, as arguably with the New Deal, the state and particularly their Governors' role was strengthened by the control given to them of the federal aid (see Elazar, 1966).

The only significant exception to the tendency toward centralization and empowerment of the federal level at the expense of states, is the more recent, New federalism. Ronald Reagan's move to provide block grants rather than funnel specific and tightly defined funding programmes through the states is a prominent example such an approach. Control of block rather than specific grants placed state executives in stronger and more flexible positions (see Conlan, 1998).

5.1.2 Maryland and its governance

Beyond the constitutional set-up, each state is unique in its demographic, historical, economic, and cultural DNA. Any attempt to identify a "typical" state, representative or all others, is doomed once the detail is delved into. Maryland however exhibits a range of demographic, economic and cultural characteristics that it shares with many other states. Sitting around the "halfway up" line on the East coast of the USA, the huge Chesapeake bay dominates the geography of the Eastern half of the state while a strip of land extends westward, ever-narrowing inland toward the Shenandoah valley. It borders Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, and three quarters of the District of Columbia – itself former Maryland territory. The western, mainly agricultural

land gives way to commuter towns and the I270 technology corridor around Washington while moving north west will unveil the outer districts, then the metropolitan area of the large city of Baltimore. The Eastern, coastal region is less dense in population and where the capital and centre of governance, Annapolis can be found on the Chesapeake Bay, at the mouth of the Severn River. Maryland's population of 6 million is overwhelmingly located in and around Baltimore and Washington.

Politically, until 2016, only two Republican governors have been elected since Nixon's controversial vice-President, Spiro Agnew resigned amidst a scandal in 1973. Electorally, Democrats collect healthy support in the heavily urbanized counties in Baltimore and around Washington, while the Republicans tend to perform well in the less populous, but more numerous rural and coastal counties. There are no notable nationalist parties, nor a particularly distinctive sub-national identity playing into the politics at either state or federal level.

Unlike the dual federalism of Belgium or the asymmetric devolution of the UK, the US's federal constitution confers identical powers upon each state. Articles 4, 5 and 6 of the constitution define US federalism and the responsibilities of states. The Tenth amendment establishes a reserved powers model by stating that any powers not granted to the federal government are within the states' competence. The states are structured around the three branches of government; the executive, judiciary and legislature. Nebraska aside, states are bicameral, with an upper (Senate) and lower house (House of Representatives/Delegates or Assembly). The executive branch consists of an elected Governor who is accompanied by a range of other directly elected officials and a cabinet of departmental secretaries (however, states have the freedom to organize the executive departments in any way). There are significant constitutional similarities between the states and, despite some notable peculiarities, the study of a single state's experience is more generalizable in the US' case than, for example, Wales is in the case of the UK.

5.1.3 International Affairs

Increasing global interdependence between actors and policy communities often cited as an explanation for the growth and involvement of US states in economic, and what

chapter 2 referred to as co-operational paradiplomacy (see McMillan, 2012: 4-5; Fry, 1998: 12-26; Kline, 1999: 134). The general theory is that an increasingly globalized and interconnected world has dragged the states into the international arena, and their executives have been presented with opportunities to engage abroad. Many domestic competences include an internationalized dimension such as economic development, education, tourism, and the environment that justify and demand state engagement. Indeed the internationalized elements of Maryland and other states' domestic competences have indeed been pursued un-controversially for several decades.

The basis for doing so derives from a loosely worded constitution, and the concurrent interpretation of that constitution. The US constitution prohibits states from engaging in binding agreements through Article 1, Section 10, which states that ; 'No State shall enter into any Treaty, Alliance, or Confederation'. The section proceeds to list further limitations on what states can engage in internationally. Kline (1996: 330) argues that this constitutional clause places a 'hard' boundary that excludes states from dealing with foreign entities. But as Kincaid has claimed, the constitution is more vague regarding international competence beyond this initial constraint. Authority for international activity has 'rested largely on constitutional interpretation, political practice, historical tradition, and intergovernmental comity' (Kincaid, 1999: 112).

Importantly, activities are not specifically referred to in the constitution, and there is no concurrent list of powers and competences, leaving a potentially ambiguous legal setting. IGR thus plays a key mediating role, giving specific meaning to the ambiguous legal setting – establishing what is, and what is not "in the rules". Consequently, debates exist concerning the 'coercive' (see Kincaid, 1990) or 'cooperative' (see Elazar, 1966) nature of US IGR, possibly because both conceptualizations apply to different forms of paradiplomacy. IGR are for Sager (2002) cooperative in the realm of the economy, because the federal and state levels often pursue similar objectives.

Bud Federal politicians also restrict other activities of states such as making political statements (though with the potential for recourse to the courts or the Intergovernmental Policy Advisory Committee and State Point of Contact (see Conlan and Sager, 2001)), a notion highlighted with regard to the 'Burma Law', explored in

detail in this chapter. It is ‘...up to politicians and foreign relations experts to determine the line of constitutionality for state and local government’ foreign relations activities’ (McMillan, 2012: 70), and states have consequently been given the freedom to pursue interests internationally, but prohibited by politicians and IGR rather than through official legal mechanisms, from engaging in certain activities. ‘In short, the US Constitution envisions limited state international action subject to the consent of the Congress as the superintending authority acting on behalf of all the states’ (Kincaid, 1999: 112). As noted, this issue and Maryland executive’s inability to engage in political paradiplomacy is explored in detail later in the chapter.

McMillan (2012: 4-5) claims that Reagan’s New federalism, the shift to block grants to states, and the associated freedom to spend that money as executives wish, was a key factor in facilitating this international involvement. Furthermore, the lengthier terms established for governors also allowed for longer term planning and more ambitious policy programmes (MacMillan, 2012: 31-32). States have thus developed their capacity to engage internationally since the 1980s in particular (see also Kincaid, 1999: 111).

Further claims regarding motivations for paradiplomacy concern Governors’ political leadership as a source of ‘...inspiration for state international activities’ (Conlan and Sager, 2001: 22). Their personal involvement has been identified as a key factor in explaining why US states ‘go international’ (Kincaid, 1984). According to Conlan, Dudley and Clark’s (2004: 197) survey of legislators, personal policy concerns of individual governors, even the desire to promote democratic governance at times, play a significant role in motivating involvement abroad.

Governors are in practice however, overwhelmingly focussed on economic interests in the international arena. McMillan claims that the competitive regional political context narrows the focus of Governors. The need to create jobs; the actions of, and competition from other states; pressure from business and interest groups; US national policy; and pressure from the electorate are all factors encouraging Governors to engage internationally in support of the economy (McMillan, 2012: 49). Federal encouragement for state involvement in economic paradiplomacy has also been noted (see Kincaid, 1984). Indeed, drawing on accounts of US state paradiplomacy (Fry, 1998; Kincaid

1999; Kline, 1999; McMillan, 2012), it is clear that states engage in economic and co-operational activities, but little else. McMillan (2012: 14-16) goes so far as to distinguish between foreign policy and foreign affairs, the latter being largely economic related, and the former being more 'political' in nature, and not the realm of states. With regard to political paradiplomatic activities, promoting democracy or engaging in international development for example, there are barriers obstructing US states.

Specifically, the IGR disciplines and restricts state involvement in political paradiplomacy. Those states in turn are self-disciplined, and avoid such activities to reinforce the sovereignty of the federal government; '...the large majority of [US state] activities seek to advance their US state's relationships with national and subnational governments in a way that does not challenge constitutional authority' (McMillan, 2012: 15).

5.1.4 Maryland international affairs

In Maryland specifically, the Office of Secretary of State (SoS), answerable to the Governor, is responsible for international affairs, and its International Division offers the Maryland executive the capacity to engage internationally. The Division attempts to play a coordinating role to; 'foster global awareness and increase the level and consistency of open dialogue and exchange between Maryland's citizens and institutions and their international counterparts' (Maryland Secretary of State, 2015). While specific departments deal with the internationalized aspects of their respective portfolios, the bulk of the International Division's work is in managing the ten Sister State Programs (SSP) and administration duties for the Subcabinet for International Affairs. The latter institution, created in 2001 to advise the Secretary of State on international issues, quickly fell dormant and was only revived in 2015 by SoS, John C. Wobensmith.^{xlii}

The SSPs are longstanding partnerships with provinces and states around the world. Their stated goals are overwhelmingly cultural or economic; to foster partnerships between businesses and cultural or educational organizations in Maryland and the Sister State (Maryland Secretary of State, 2015a). The SoS does not see a role for itself in developing Maryland's engagement internationally beyond the economic, cultural or

educational sphere. This is not to claim that these spheres of activity are not in themselves political, but that officials and representatives have made a distinction between such activities and other involvement in perhaps more overtly or explicitly 'political' issues.

As with the constitution, the political context within Maryland does not create typically expected opportunities to engage in political paradiplomacy. There are no nationalist or identity-based parties competing, and the only incentives to engage abroad are economic. The initial review of the domestic structures therefore, suggest that the state's agency will be constrained to economic or co-operational paradiplomacy, both by the IGR that manage the constitutional ambiguities, and the political context. While there are opportunity structures for paradiplomacy, there are limits to the nature of that paradiplomacy; there are no opportunities for political paradiplomacy, or incentives for regional actors to challenge the existing structures.

By way of concluding the introductory section, we may review the opportunity structures in the case of Maryland. Its institutional capacity is potentially strong with the freedoms allowed by Reagan's new federalism reforms. No nationalist parties exist however, nor any notable territorial identity. Constitutional competence is unclear in the realm of international relations but is clarified through the disciplining IGR. The IGR are informal and offer no official input into US foreign policy. While not a member of continental organizations, the responsibility and expectation to engage internationally to benefit the domestic economy theoretically offers opportunities and motivations for engaging abroad, though not necessarily to promote democracy. The US meanwhile, is the most significant promoter of democracy across the world.

This chapter will now explore the lack of agency wielded by state executives in the realm of political paradiplomacy, detailing key incidents that appear to have established firm rules barring state agency in the realm of political paradiplomacy or engaging in the promotion of democracy. It will then explore instances of democracy promotion that nonetheless involve Maryland organizations and officials. Specifically, this chapter will look at the National Guard's State Partnership Program; the National Conference of

State Legislature's activities; the University of Maryland's 'Maryland-China Initiative'; and finally, federal programmes such as the Congress funded Open World Program.

5.2 State legislation and economic sanctions

A key finding, corroborating the existing academic literature, is that the IGR work to restrict the sub-state's international agency, and Maryland is unable to engage in political paradiplomacy, in pro-democracy gestures, or politicising their own legislation. The use of domestic legislation and economic sanctions highlights this issue.

The use of legislation by states to establish economic penalties that will harm anti-democratic countries – negative linkages – has a history and arguably, quite an impact. Instances date as far back as the mid-1970s as states applied human rights laws to penalise international businesses (see Kline, 1999: 115). Symbolic resolutions condemning the human rights violations abroad had been passed before but largely ignored until they were explicitly coupled with economic sanctions (Howard, 2004: 186). One of the most prominent examples of such coupling, and a juncture in the development of state paradiplomacy it is argued, would be Massachusetts and its 'Burma Law' in 1998.

Duplicating similar sanctions placed by some states on the governments of South Africa, Cuba and Nigeria in previous years, the law limited access to state procurement contracts for any company that did business in Burma (Myanmar) (see Fry, 2009: 302). Political and liberal motivations are claimed to lie behind such actions.

The law's official objective, as noted in a U.S. district court ruling on 4 November 1998, was "solely to sanction Myanmar for human rights violations and to change Myanmar's domestic policies." The court decision quotes Rushing in the bill's legislative history as specifically identifying the policy objective as "free democratic elections in Burma" (Kline, 1999: 118).

Here, regional forces manipulated the capabilities of the state legislature to penalise Burma or, in democracy promotion parlance, to attach a negative linkage. Specifically, individuals such as the Bill's sponsor, Byron Rushing who; 'almost single-handedly pushed a Myanmar sanctions bill through the Massachusetts legislature' (Greenberger, 1998: A20). The notable aspect of the Burma Law was the contradictory silence of the

federal level with regard to human rights issues in Burma. Massachusetts was not “going along” with federal policy, it was declaring a policy position where the federal government had none. In making innovative use of procurement legislation, the sub-state or individual members, were legally able to engage in international democracy promotion and attach negative linkages to harm anti-democratic countries, to the chagrin of the federal level.

The federal level was pushed into action and passed sanctions of their own. After the filing a suit against the state, the US Supreme Court ruled in favour of the National Foreign Trade Council, stating that the federal government’s sanctions effectively superseded the state’s law; which was therefore not able to be enacted.⁵ The response of the federal level set an equally clear precedent, that this action from states would not be allowed in future, unless Congress changes its position (see Stumberg and Porterfield, 2001: 202-204).

Indeed, IGR continue to play a key role in disciplining the sub-states since the Burma Law. One long-serving Maryland state senator recalls an attempt to pass a bill, after the Burma Law, to denounce harmful business practices in Nigeria and Ghana that attracted federal attention;

It was sailing along. At that time, I think at that time Clinton was in, two assistant secretaries of commerce from the federal government showed up in my committee with the President of the Senate and they were really upset about it. They’d heard that Amnesty International had come to testify on the bill, and the bill was sailing right through. All we were going to have was a statement, a proclamation saying, you know ‘do not do this’. But anyway, that was stopped... it was as if the president of our Senate was afraid of what the federal government was going to do and he just said to the committee chair that ‘you’ve got to shut this bill down, it can’t go’..^{xliii}

As claimed, the sensitivity and disciplining approach of the federal level has a considerable impact on the state’s capacity to display agency in the realm of political

⁵ Despite never technically being enacted, the Burma Law is nonetheless credited with many successes such as the disengagement of at least 116 multinational companies, 67 of them US from Burma; the spurring into action of the Clinton administration which went on to ban 11 products of Burma where child-labour was used; and the resulting media visibility gained from the incident (Stumberg and Porterfield, 2001: 179). It could and is claimed therefore, that such activities have impact.

paradiplomacy. This path has been institutionalized, and successive generations of federal representatives reinforce the rules.

Very clearly, if we really step over bounds, the feds will come right down. We don't have to remind them, they watch to make sure of their prerogatives. Even our Maryland members to the Congress will watch to protect their prerogatives and their territory... They become very, very jealous of their prerogatives.^{xliv}

Furthermore, with the exception of personal cases, often regarding immigration or visa issues, no significant lobbying of state legislators or the SoS was witnessed with regard to Maryland senators and the promotion of democracy abroad.^{xlv}

The Burma law of 1998 has shaken the federal level into a watchful enforcement of the convention that political foreign policy is their prerogative. It could be viewed as a key juncture that led to a closing through the *IGR* of that path for states to influence democratic conditions in other countries through their own domestic powers. Certainly in the eyes of legislators and governors in Maryland, there is no longer a role for the state to act in the manner others did with regard to South Africa, Nigeria or Burma.

5.3 National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP)

This section will outline the democracy promotion involved in the National Guard's (NG) State Partnership Program (SPP). It will argue that though a state asset, it is subcontracted by, under the control of national level organizations. It is a means by which national level organizations can accomplish their own strategic goals.

The Maryland National Guard (NG) is a rather unique structure in being an armed force subordinate to the state's Governor; a rare example of a sub-state military force and through its activities, promotes democracy abroad. As a state, not federal asset, the National Guard is technically under the control of the executive. Specifically, the Adjutant General, subordinate to the Governor, retains ultimate control of the Guard and wields the freedom to activate personnel in response to disasters or in the name of homeland defence.

The National Guard Bureau (NGB) coordinates between the various forces and liaises with the federal level. Though autonomous, the relationship between NG and the federal

level is a warm one; the federal government foots the bill for the Guard and the Pentagon provides nearly all the equipment (Howard, 2004: 181). The National Guard are also as committed as any other branch of US armed forces to the National Security Strategy.

As well as operating alongside US armed forces in combat theatres, National Guard personnel have also been deployed in support of US foreign policy missions. Since 1992, through SPPs, long-term partnerships have been established between a particular state's National Guard and a partner country's armed forces. The SPPs consist of National Guard led military-to-military, and occasionally civilian-to-military or civilian-to-civilian projects aimed at developing civil-military relationships, and the democratic accountability of military forces around the world (Howard, 2004: 191). Maryland's National Guard maintain two SPPs. The Estonia SPP was amongst the first to be established in April 1993, while the Bosnia-Herzegovina partnership was formally initiated in January 2003.

5.3.1 Historical development

The origins of the SPPs are to be found in the political and security context of the Baltic and Central and Eastern Europe following the demise of the USSR, and the manner in which US policymakers perceived and reacted to that context. Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Lt. Gen. John B. Conway's letter of January 2nd 1992, offering the services and personnel of the National Guard to the US military, was warmly received by Gen. Colin L. Powell. The latter's response of 24 January states; 'We are currently in the process of enhancing our military-to-military contacts with these republics with the intention of helping them create a responsible military force within a democratic society' (cited in Boehm, 2014: 2). From the start, the broad strategy for engagement was set and the NG's role would be aligned with its aims to develop democratic society in partner states and construct strategic alliances.

The Joint Contact Team Program (JCTP) – an EUCOM body established in 1992 for coordinating with the National Guard and partner countries' defence ministries and armed forces – funded the SPPs in its initial phase as a means of supporting efforts in post-Soviet Central and Eastern Europe. The National Guard Bureau also provided a

\$1m funding line to support SPP's activities (Howard, 2004: 182), allowing them to expand a little beyond the strict military-to-military programmes allowed for by the JCTP funding.

The JCTP identified the Guard as an actor with particular beneficial characteristics within the political context. 'At the time, it was believed [a] reserve component personnel would present a less aggressive posture to the new Russian Federation' (National Guard, 2014: 2), an early attempt to capitalize on the geopolitically removed understandings of sub-states and their assets.

Specific activities are explored below, but with time, the SPPs were expanded beyond former Soviet Europe and beyond a particular role within the political situation of the early 1990s, into a consistent element of US strategic partnerships. As a senior officer explains;

It may have been the spark that started the fire but SPP's grown beyond that. It's grown to developing nations and our desire spread democracy. But really to ally ourselves with those nations, to develop partnerships with those nations so that's why it's spread into Africa, all through Europe, South America, Asia. That's why it's spread as far as it has, because of the influence, because of the partnerships that we want to develop with those countries. Positive, and good partnerships with those countries.^{xlvi}

As of 2015, there were 65 SPPs in operation around the globe, the majority in Europe and South America (22 each). Once again, the broader national and global contexts must be acknowledged when understanding the SPP's proliferation. The changing security contexts around the globe during the 1990s, more allowing of a softer approach by the US would be one consideration. Another would be president Clinton's 1994 National Security Strategy which set out a more liberal approach to foreign policy focusing on partnerships and 'democratic enlargement' (see Bouchet, 2013: 159-177) which, coupled with the perceived success of the existing SPPs, opened a space for an expansion of the programme.

The SPP was thus well-positioned to expand on the established tradition of military-to-military cooperation among NATO allies to now include the newly independent democracies of the post-Cold War world (Boehm, 2014: 16).

In expanding, the core mission was not modified, as can be witnessed within policy documents dating from 2004 while the Bosnia-Herzegovina SPP was being developed. The SPP's tactical role in a broader strategy of democratization and alliance-building was consistent;

Maryland also has been selected to partner with Bosnia-Herzegovina in part because of the success with Estonia. Maryland will have a key role in this international initiative to foster democracy, encourage market economies, and promote regional cooperation and stability. The partnership program emphasizes civil and military cooperation with civil control of a professional military (Maryland Military Department, 2005: 18).

Another major benefit and key facilitating condition for the military planners at EUCOM was that the National Guard were not an extra expense having, in effect, already been paid for by a separate federal funding line. Recognised as low-cost, high-impact programmes, they are much appreciated by EUCOM and commanders.

Constituting nearly a quarter of the 1,281 total EUCOM events, at a modest cost of \$2.8 million (2.2 million euros), the SPP is arguably one of the most cost-effective security cooperation tools ever implemented by the U.S. military (EUCOM, 2013: 6).

For Admiral Stavridis, the EUCOM Commander since 2009, 'The State Partnership Program is, dollar for dollar, my best EUCOM investment' (EUCOM, 2015). The SPPs' projects have been valued contributions to, and nestled within, the US, EUCOM and NATO's broader strategic approach to Central and Eastern Europe and later the world.

The SPP is indebted therefore to the national level military and foreign policy factors, as well as the particular global security context after the Cold War, to facilitate the establishment of the partnerships. Its foreign operations are also paid for by national organizations and the broad scope of its activities largely decided by those levels of command.

5.3.2 Strategy

This latter point regarding the place of the SPPs within a broader strategy is key to understanding their democratic contribution. The central and explicit focus of the SPPs has been the development of familiarization and interoperability between US and partner armed forces. There are no explicit or measurable programmes that contribute

to the development of democracy and, taken in isolation, the SPPs' democratic contribution is difficult to analyse or measure. In developing familiarization and interoperability however, the SPPs facilitate the sharing and learning of knowledge regarding the role of a military within, and subordinate to, a civilian and democratic government. Taken as a part of a broader, multi-level strategy of engagement, communication and cooperation with partner countries therefore, the SPPs play a key role at the individual level. To take a military analogy, the SPPs are tactical level activities that contribute to the broader operational and strategic goal of supporting the development of democracy. As a senior officer explains;

One of the things we stress in the military is that you nest your plan. So there's a strategic plan, there's an operational plan, and there's a tactical plan. Each one of those is nested but it's at a different level. So when you get to SPP, we have our goals, but one of our goals isn't stated as supporting democracy – it's stated in different ways. We have different goals. Now when they support up that ladder, does what we're doing here at the ground level with SPP, even though we [also] have a strategic scope, does what we're doing support those democratic goals of NATO, of EUCOM commander? Does it support the goals of that ambassador, of that embassy and our country? Yes, you bet. So what we're doing at the ground level does support those higher level goals.^{xlvi}

Or in the programme's official language;

The program demonstrates, perhaps more than anything else, the importance of trust in international relations. By linking U.S. states with designated partner countries, the SPP promotes access, increases military capabilities, improves interoperability and enhances the principles of responsible governance. It helps to prevent states from failing and contributes to a stable Europe. It supports the broad national interests and international security cooperation goals of the U.S. by engaging partner nations through military, socio-political, and economic conduits at the local, state and national levels. All of these functions support NATO efforts (EUCOM, 2013: 5).

Democracy, and the employment of the SPPs in support of its development within partner states, is also clearly and explicitly conceived of as a means of fostering trust and alliances with international partners; a notion deeply rooted within a liberal internationalist perspective.

5.3.3 Activities

“On the ground”, the SPP consists of events, exercises and training activities with representatives from both sides of the partnership present. The key objective is to develop the concepts of familiarization and interoperability. The former refers to the mutual understanding of each other’s armed forces capacity, responsibilities and limitations. The latter involves developing the capacity of the partners to cooperate in operations, again involving a deeper cultural as well as technical understanding of each other’s armed forces. At the SPP level, as noted, the overriding and explicit objective is not to promote democracy, but rather a military one;

We call it a ‘crosstrain’. It’s making sure you can interact with someone else. So that if I go to war with you [as an ally], we both are speaking the same language, we use similar tactics, so that we can work together on the battlefield if you will. That’s a big reason that we do what we do, so that we can work together if we ever need to. That’s one of many goals but I’d say that’s *the* top reason we do what we do.^{xlvi}

The broad area of activities are decided after consultation with the partner team and the embassy, then the National Guard will develop its plan alongside the partner armed forces. All personnel involved in the activities are national guard from Maryland, with a few, rare exceptions where the expertise or specialist must be found from another state. While activities have branched out beyond the military, the partnership does not involve establishing relationships for businesses; ‘We are not in the practice of putting business relationships together’.^{xli}

Events normally last around a week, involving either 3-9 guests training with a company, brigade or larger force in Maryland. The SPP also involves teams of specialists going to the partner country to work alongside Estonian or Bosnia-Herzegovinian forces. There are around 50 engagements per year with the majority held in the partner country. While the technical knowledge being exchanged is military, the level of contact is personal.

What comes from it? The relationships, the close partnerships, and those relationships again span from a soldier on the ground all the way up to the general officer level. They all have those relationships and they’re all cultivated. One of the things that the State Partnership really does is facilitate, to put those people at all those different levels together. So that

they can cooperate and familiarize and become interoperable with each other.¹

The Guard have engaged with military authorities, working to develop the relationships with and respect of democratic civilian authorities. It is claimed that;

Learning to work with and respect the authority of civilian authorities has been a major accomplishment for the Kaitselut [sic], an accomplishment directly linked to its strong ties to the Maryland guard (Howard, 2004: 191).

The rapid change from a USSR dependent military force to one which was considered representative of the Estonian population, subordinate to its civilian government, has been hailed as a mark of success (Boehm, 2014: 19).

In other cases, some National Guard activities have expanded along the margin of that core mission. Two programmes were started with the aid of the NGB funding line; GUARDEX and the Minuteman Fellowships. GUARDEX were two week annual training sessions with a designated guard units, a form of military exchange programme. Minutemen Fellowships were also a form of exchange programme but also involved state and local government officials and non-military missions (Howard, 2004: 182). The SPPs have also drawn on a range of further funding programmes such as the Cooperative Threat Reduction (Nunn-Lugar programme), environmental programs and other department of defence security assistance programmes. 'The extra guard money, however, is critically important for the success of the SPP because it lets the guard fund and program nonmilitary events' (Howard, 2004: 183). It must be noted however that these nonmilitary events were complimentary activities, alongside the core of the SPP, not a shift in focus.

Some have become involved in mentoring troubled youths and supporting Mayors of sister cities and their attempts to develop the provision of services in a democracy.

SPP guidelines therefore call for gradually shifting partnership responsibilities to civilian authorities at the federal and state level once the military phases of each state partnership have been completed. Apart from the NGB, however, it is not clear whether any federal officials – from either the State or Defence Department – are given the states much guidance or any funding to continue their partnerships once the maturation stage ends (Owens and Eid, 2002: 160).

This latter claim is more relevant however to other SPPs. The Maryland Guard SPPs have remained overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, military-to-military in nature.

Howard has argued that the SPPs could be developed further and more should be made of them as valuable tools for supporting the transition to democracy, specifically because of their ability to draw from state-level expertise.

In many of these program areas, states are ideal models for transitioning democracies, for it is the state governments, not the federal government, that have experience providing the public services that their partners are now exploring (Howard, 2004: 184).

Former Colorado Governor Bill Owens and his cabinet member, Troy Eid also claim that the SPPs can; ‘...serve as a model for other democracy-building initiatives’ (Owens and Eid, 2002: 162). In the case of Maryland at least, this seems to be an overestimation of the democratic contribution of the programme. This is not to say that Howard’s argument doesn’t hold, only that in Maryland’s case, the democracy-building initiatives outside military-to-military programmes have not been as extensive as in other states.

Speculation from these authors regarding the potential development of the SPP obscures its limitations however. Firstly, the authors omit in their presentations of the SPPs’ virtues, the fact that the programmes are merely the tactical element of a much broader operational and strategic approach to the partner countries and region. To disconnect the SPP from everything else would be to deprive the activities of the broader partnership between the US and NATO, and the partner. SPP works, or is understood to work, because of its place within a broader partnership.

Furthermore, the authors fail to take into account that the SPPs benefit or suffer from the same limitations and barriers as the national military forces. The SPP is understood as a US asset, despite being technically under the state and governor’s jurisdiction.

...we’re a military to military organization and we fall under the political barriers that a University may not... But no, are we going to have that direct relationship with a country like China when we don’t have that kind of relationship at the federal level? You won’t find that with SPP because of the military aspect.^{li}

Ultimately, the SPPs exist due to national level resources, political decision, and strategic planning. They and the NG are effectively resources to subcontract in support of broader organizations that promote democracy. What the SPPs offer is a particular, non-aggressive military partnership that seeks to foster trust and democracy and a force with which to engage in that partnership that is not imbued with the same symbolic political meaning as the US military.

Partners must already or potentially be strategic allies of the US. In this sense, the SPP is not a more effective substitute to the federal or national level programmes and organization. It can only complement them, albeit in the eyes of military planners in a manner that presents a less aggressive posture.

With regard to the sub-state executive's engagement with the National guard, there is little to suggest that the involvement is much more than symbolic. The Adjutant General (TAG) is normally a two-star General in command of the state's military forces and is subordinate to the Governor. The SPP's contribution is recognized, and indeed celebrated by state governments through the TAG. As Maryland's TAG, Major General James A. Adkins claims;

Through the State Partnership Program, we are able to truly make a difference to fledgling democracies. Our service members' experiences with the program pay dividends when our units deploy in support of overseas contingency operations (EUCOM, 2013: 29).

It has also been claimed that the involvement of states, via the SPPs, helps generate political support from within the US for the federal government's international democracy building initiatives;

...the SPP helps generate grassroots political support at the state level for U.S. democracy building abroad. Companies and entrepreneurs in Colorado and many other states are closely watching the progress of NATO enlargement as a proxy for predicting future market stability and privatization in Central and Eastern Europe (Owens and Eid, 2002: 165).

However, the involvement of the Maryland state executive at least, despite the competency for the National Guard, is very limited. A clear division exists based on the understanding that the military officers hold the expertise. As a senior officer explains, perplexed by the suggestion;

Well, could they [influence National Guard activities]? Yes I guess they could, but why would they? Do they understand the requirements of that country? Who understands that best? Probably that ambassador and team in that country. And somebody who understands that maybe even better would be that commander, the centralized European commander if you will. And supporting this is our team, our general. So would you want to become embroiled in that? Probably not.^{lii}

National Guard activities rarely, if ever, draw media attention and are even less likely to register as issues in public discourse amongst politicians and the public. Politicians don't seek to influence the Guard's activities. As one state senator states – also puzzled by the suggestion that the Governor would seek to use the NG to pursue alternative objectives; 'you'd think the federal government wouldn't ask unless they really had need and I guess you'd consider it almost an honour that you actually can help'.^{liii}

Maryland's executive wields no agency with regard to the National Guard's international activities. Its competence over the National Guard, outside disaster and emergency relief roles, is close to ceremonial in nature. Influence is not wielded over the SPPs or the Guard's activities when working alongside federal agencies and US armed forces. Nonetheless, the National Guard has shown itself to be a means of supporting US foreign policy through state assets. The security and political context of the early 1990s is key to opening the door for soft power approaches such as the SPP, and the perceived success of the early SPPs, coupled with national policy, justified a proliferation of partnerships. Through the SPP, National Guards play what is perceived as an important role in supporting the soft power attempts to build alliances. The democratic contribution of the SPP meanwhile is considered important, but must be taken in the context of a broader strategic approach. While it is claimed that SPPs can develop beyond their current scope, there is little data to suggest that this has been the case to a large extent in Maryland and the partnership remains overwhelmingly military-to-military in nature.

The Guard personnel play a key part in the development of projects and the actual transfer of knowledge to the partner. However the political agency at any, particularly the broader, strategic level of the SPPs' work is not forthcoming from state level forces. Rather, national level agency from the federal government and its military structure is the key consideration. The Guard is merely a regional level opportunity structure for

those political forces at other levels. The democratic contribution of these state assets are therefore explained more by national and global structures or agency than those at the region, state level.



5.4 National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)

The NCSL represents the 50 states, their legislatures, and staff. Created by merging three organizations in 1975, the NCSL has grown to an organization employing around 150 staff members committed to three core missions that aim to;

- Improve the quality and effectiveness of state legislatures.

- Promote policy innovation and communication among state legislatures.
- Ensure state legislatures a strong, cohesive voice in the federal system.

(NCSL, 2015)

An important aspect of the NCSL's work is the sharing between the states of governance related good practice and technical knowledge. In this sense, and with the NCSL as a hub, the states have consistently promoted democracy and developed democratic good practice between themselves since at least 1975. The organization also has a lobbying arm, located in Washington D.C., that aims to promote the interests of state legislatures in the federal legislature. Also located in DC is the organization's international division, of most interest to this project.

The organizational history of the NCSL's international work is not documented, but long-time staff members recall a formalization of an exchange-based relationship with Germany in 1988 upon the request of the Germans, who declared an interest in sharing good practice and exploring ideas regarding federal governance. With funding from the State Department initially, the international division – a small unit comprising by today of two full time members of staff – was established to coordinate such relationships. To complement the division's work, an international committee was established for members of the NCSL as a means of exploring trade promotion, export, import and other economic related international issues. By 2010 however, it was deemed that a separate standing committee was required for economic related international issues and a new, Task Force on International Relations was established for members to explore a range of non-economic international issues. Its mission is to;

- Review NCSL activities with international governments, including subnational governments;
- Provide a forum for the exchange of ideas on international activities;
- Coordinate and support other NCSL policy activities with an international focus;
- Exchange ideas with international counterparts regarding public policy and institutional matters;
- Cooperate with other international legislative organizations; and

- Investigate whether there are resources from the US Government, foreign governments or foundations to support expanded international cooperation between legislators, legislative staff and their counterparts in other national/subnational governments.

(NCSL, 2015a: 1)

Most of these objectives involve the promotion or sharing of democratic good practice in some form or another.

The task force explores and attempts to make use of federal, foundation or foreign funding to support international cooperation between state legislature staff or members and their foreign counterparts. The international division administers the work of bidding for funding, developing the programmes, and coordinating volunteers. The organization also involves itself with other multilateral organizations and networks of sub-states based around the world.

5.4.1 Contracting

There is no guiding strategy for the task force, which works in an *ad hoc* fashion based on the decisions of its voluntary membership. Nevertheless, staff claimed that there were some broad “rules” that have emerged over time relating to the types of partners and work the NCSL would engage with. Firstly, a desire to develop relations and share experiences with federal states and sub-states prioritises certain partners. Secondly, they are characterised by the desire to promote democracy. As one senior staff member claims;

Well certainly democracy promotion would be one [guiding principle]. We think our system is a good one so we want to promote democracy, and we think that comes through in everything we do, in all of the international activities, no matter who we’re talking to.^{liv}

With regard to partners, NCSL has been involved in a range of international programmes that promote democracy such as the Legislative Education and Practice Programme. It has also worked alongside the NDI, IRI, and USAID on technical assistance contracts, providing specific, expert element to their programming around the world. In working alongside other international and transnational organizations and networks, the NCSL has also been involved in sharing democratic good practice with

Germany's Partnership of Parliaments, Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, The Arab Interparliamentary Union, Brazil's Uniao Nacional dos Legisladores e Legislativos Estaduais, and the Conference of European Regional Legislative Assemblies (NCSL, 2015a: 2). The relationships with the associations are often based on memorandums of understanding developed by the task force that set terms or themes for cooperation. The sharing of democratic good practice is a core element of these memorandums, as witnessed again in the most recent MoU under development between the NCSL and the Conference of European Regional Legislative Assemblies;

Considering that the Conferences:

...

Recognize the importance of strengthening interinstitutional relations toward mutual understanding and exchange of experiences, while acknowledging mutual peculiarities and differences, in the recognition of common traditions and cultural values as well as in the respect of the principles of equality, democracy and rule of law;

...

Agree to:

...

Carry out a cooperative understanding to share, between United States and Europe, knowledge, experiences, information, ideas, procedures and best governance practices aimed to convey the distinct nature of each political-institutional experience of the respective Conferences; consolidating multilevel governance systems allowing a constructive dialogue instrumental to the improvement and growth of the institutional and legislative activity of each member...

(NCSL, 2015c)

The contracting work of the NCSL meanwhile, is the result of the international division staff bidding for, and winning tenders and Requests for Proposal (RfPs). Consequently, in this regard the NCSL plays a client role to the democracy or development institutions' and the State Department's donor role. The nature of this relationship varies depending on the donor. USAID for example hold an Indefinite Quantity Contract with the NCSL

which ensures that, while never a prime contractor, NCSL can be ‘used’ by USAID for the provision of ‘expertise’, without the need to go to tender.

The IRI and NDI on the other hand subcontract through RfPs, often as part of a larger projects with their partners. The NCSL does enjoy a privileged position in the tendering process as a ‘Peer Organization’ of the NDI, officially recognized as a provider of;

...research, technical assistance and opportunities for policymakers to exchange ideas on state-related issues” and an “effective and respected advocate for the interests of state governments before Congress and federal agencies (NDI, 2015).

IRI do not offer the NCSL such a position but do make use of the NCSL as a source of expertise (see IRI, 2015).

The NCSL looks to only work alongside parliaments when seeking NDI, IRI, or State Department contracts.^{lv} In this sense, they are selective clients who remain close to their own ‘rules’ when engaging on behalf of others. This is an important provision for their bidding for work and reflects the core principles that govern the NCSL’s engagement.

5.4.2 Technical assistance and legislative exchanges

Once awarded, the NCSL’s main method of working is through the technical assistance or legislative exchange programs. The activities involve the use of state legislature staff and elected members imparting their knowledge and expertise, or in the case of exchanges, visiting or hosting delegations from partners. The staff and members are brought in on a voluntary basis to host the workshops and seminars. Volunteers come from all states and the groups for specific workshops can be from the same state, a few states or a range. A grant would typically fund a series of workshops, each running for between 7-20 days over the course of a few years. The workshops are very much a mutual learning exercise during the early stages of a partnership. Over time however, the workshops develop into specific explorations of particular issues and challenges. As one officer explains;

You have to determine the capacity of the legislature. I mean, a lot of it at the beginning is doing an assessment and figuring out what the capacity of the

legislature is and where they are. We did a workshop with staff of the National Assembly [of Mozambique] and also did one with MPs and staff. They focused on member-staff relations, human resources and establishing the legislative staff as a non-partisan staff, one that is knowledgeable about the institution and there for the institution itself. We also worked a little bit previously on budgetary issues. The workshops kind of progress and over time the relationship gets stronger and our counterparts are more open to delving into more detailed work.^{lvi}

The NCSL's work within the NDI's programming in Kosovo (2009-2012) provides an insight into the nature of sub-state involvement. As a provider of the 'expertise' for the Kosovo Assembly Strengthening Programme (KASP), the NCSL, and consequently sub-state staff and members, have been on the 'front line' of US efforts to promote and develop the democracy there.

KASP supports the Kosovo Assembly following Kosovo's recent declaration of independence, in which the Assembly is navigating a transition from international tutelage toward reliance on its own domestic capacity. The program assists the Assembly in shaping its behaviour to be driven by domestic interests and constituencies. Our work is being carried out through technical workshops, mentoring, the creation of operation manuals, and issue expert resources during the three-year program (NCSL, 2015b).

From 2009-2012, the legislative strengthening activities consisted of the implementation of the Kosovo Legislative Staff Management Institute; '...a three-phase executive management training program for senior staff designed to enhance excellence and professionalism' (NCSL, 2015b). The Institute aims to develop professionalism as well as the skills of the executive management of the Assembly together with the explicit objective of 'Advancing the role of the Assembly as a vital institution of Kosovar democracy' (NCSL, 2015b). The institute consisted of three 2.5 day workshops held between 2010 and 2011 which emphasized a "learning by doing" approach, taking advantage of the immediate practical experiences of the staff that volunteer.

The NCSL sees itself as an ideal promoter of democratic good practice internationally claiming;

Topics like transparency in government, accountability, ethics and citizen involvement have become the cornerstone in efforts to fortify links between legislatures and constituents. U.S. states provide an excellent example of decentralization, from which emerging democracies often draw lessons from and examine when establishing institutional norms within their own

governing structure. Our federalist system is widely studied, and touted because, in principle, government entities that are closest to the people are more responsive to those they represent (NCSL, 2015a: 1).

Consequently, NCSL staff are enthusiastic about the contribution of US states to the broader efforts to promote democracy across the globe. As an official claims;

Our system of democracy is such that we think it's a good system, we think that the way the intergovernmental system is structured works. That's not to say that we don't have tensions between the states and the federal government but, pretty much, it works. And we're happy to share that information with other countries, particularly developing countries where they may be struggling to figure out exactly how their system should work.^{lvii}

Although individual grants may be awarded for specific projects such as the KASP, and notwithstanding the NCSL's focus on parliaments, the organization's task force works to ensure that the technical assistance and legislative exchange programmes that are established revolve around certain themes.

Our technical assistance activities emphasize transparency, accountability, oversight, skills development and legislative management, all key factors in promoting representative democracy with our parliamentary counterparts throughout the world and encouraging relationships between the citizenry and their government (NCSL, 2015a: 2).

These are the elements that staff themselves suggest are strengths of the organization's members and US states in general. The technical assistance and legislative exchanges draw contributions by a range of legislative staff on a variety of topics. As part of the Mozambique-U.S. Legislative Program in 2011 for example – a three year programme of workshops – a senior manager of the Fiscal and Policy Analysis Office of Maryland's Department of Legislative Services provided expert knowledge and advice on fiscal analysis and budgetary scrutiny – topics that were decided upon based on the Mozambique Assembly's stated needs and goals (NCSL, 2011). The US-South Africa Legislative Program meanwhile relied upon representatives from Colorado, Illinois, New York, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming as NCSL experts and the deliverers of the programme. The two year programme involved firstly, the introduction of democratic concepts to the South African provincial legislatures such as independent ethics commissions, legislated ethics policies, codes of conduct for staff and MPs, and the function of ethics committees. After introduction and training during

the South Africans' US Study Tour, a follow-up visit was conducted by the NCSL experts (sub-state staff and elected members) to South Africa in order to monitor the implementation (see also NCSL, 2011b).

The NCSL has provided technical assistance in over 35 countries (NCSL, 2015d). It has also conducted legislative exchanges with a range of countries including Algeria, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Italy, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Namibia, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Taiwan, Zambia and Zimbabwe (NCSL, 2015e).

Although the NCSL is conditionally tied to the requirements and broad topics of the funding received as well as the demand of the donor, its involvement still revolves around parliaments and certain themes. Within that context, their practitioners are presented with a freedom to lead and develop their programmes. The NCSL works to ensure a particular focus on their 'expertise' in transparency, accountability, oversight and contact between citizen and government. Furthermore, this expertise derives from volunteers and their immediate practical experience. In developing the delivery of their knowledge within the various forums with partners, the NCSL's practitioners are taking the control of the message, and to an extent, the content away from their funders; the NDI, IRI, USAID or the State Department.

The *national level opportunity structures* are the key considerations. Both the NCSL itself as a coordinating institution that bids for contracts, and the *national level democracy organizations* such as USAID or NDI, are key facilitators. Agency is also located at the national level, in the international division's pursuit, and democracy organizations' subcontracting of democracy programmes. The only agency on the region level comes from the individual legislature members and staff that volunteer with the programmes. Maryland's executive has no agency in this case.

5.5 The Maryland China Initiative

In short, the Maryland China Initiative (MCI) offers expert governance training for senior Chinese officials. It receives privileged treatment from federal bodies and generous funding from China. The practitioners, the governance experts in question are

Maryland state officials and other volunteer staff from the state legislature who are subcontracted by a university department to provide governance assistance. Through the MCI, US governance practices have been promoted and shared with Chinese officials with very little scrutiny, attention, or controversy due to the depoliticized nature of the initiative; through a University, using functional or technical sub-state expertise. The level of strategic control and involvement in the MCI by both Chinese and US governments marks its governance programme out as much more than a university department offering a course involving Maryland state expertise; it is a proxy, and a more acceptable vehicle to exchange and promote good democratic governance knowledge.

The University of Maryland (UMD) itself can claim an important role in the history of US-China relations. Not only central to the first US-China Sister State relationship in the 1980s, but also as the host of the Ping-Pong Diplomacy matches in 1972 which preceded a thaw in Sino-American relations. The MCI itself meanwhile was one of the first university departments to establish a Chinese government-approved training programme for officials during the 1990s, and in 2004, the location for the first Confucius Institute in the US.

The MCI (by today the Office of China Affairs, but for clarity, referred to here as the MCI) claim officially to have been founded in 1996 by the former US Ambassador to China, James Lilley to 'strengthen institutions, advance knowledge of best practices, and facilitate collaboration between American and Chinese professionals working in the public interest' (UMD, 2015). Officials working to develop the MCI from its early days however claim a more serendipitous genesis. Beginning through the Sister-State relationship with Anhui province in the early 1980s, ties developed and deepened through evolving business links. Quite separately, an endowment from a wealthy Taiwanese group established the Institute for Global Chinese Affairs, launching UMD as a centre for Chinese study and a suitable institution for the Chinese government to locate its governance training base. Initial training programmes were provided for officials from Anhui and then Hunan Provinces before the Chinese Government approached with the aim of establishing a more permanent training centre at UMD.

5.5.1 Content, candidates, and funding

Regardless of origins, Chinese officials wield a large degree of control over the broader aspects of the MCI's training. Topic as well as candidates for the MCI's programmes are selected by the Chinese Foreign and External Bureau and provincial training directors. The MCI or even the US federal government's role in these decisions was minimal. As an MCI official claims;

From the Chinese side, this is controlled by the central government and the Administration for Foreign and External Affairs [sic]. They control it – and control is the right word – they control the use of central training programmes and the use – as we'd be considered within the Chinese system – of experts. This is not an education programme run by an University. Our job was providing expert knowledge...

...they make sure that we understand what they want and that they're satisfied that we've "got it". Then in a couple of months someone from the Foreign Experts Bureau comes out and says "these are the ones we've picked for you". So this is very bureaucratized.^{lviii}

The Chinese control over the MCI's training derives from its funding – all from the Chinese government. Only a single series of programmes stand out as exceptional in that they were funded by the US government. China's membership of the World Trade Organization required substantial reforms to be implemented prior to ratification in December 2001. From 2000, officials recall a focus on specific programmes preparing China for membership. Foot safety emerged as a significant issue where expertise was sought externally and MCI became a key provider of that expertise to Chinese officials. The WTO related programmes aside, the centre is very much a Chinese training centre, located in Maryland and making use of Maryland governance expertise. Nonetheless, the US federal government plays a key role in facilitating the partnership through generous visa allowances and lowering costs. Federal officials worked alongside the MCI and China to secure educational visas and lower costs to the Chinese. As a long serving official claims;

...we weren't going to charge the Chinese these outrageous silverbed rates that the university charges corporations or other people. No, no, no. We were going to treat them as contracts, like special contracts exempt from the bureaucracy on the federal government and the state government. This was really critical. It absolutely could not have happened without these

exemptions from the bureaucracy. So we worked at a high level throughout and everybody wanted this to happen.

The people at the federal State department viewed this as 'us doing outreach' or diplomacy in a way they couldn't.^{lix}

Enthusiasm and support for the MCI's work therefore existed from all three partners – the US federal government, the UMD itself, and the Chinese. This control and strategic involvement in the MCI by the Chinese and US federal government supports the notion that the MCI is a structure or a means of sourcing experts and practitioners of democratic governance, used by the US and China, and much more than simply a university department offering a course.

This project does not explore the recipient aspect of these projects, but a fair assumption, given the continued support from the Chinese would be that they were sufficiently happy with the training provided. Officials claim;

They consider us one of the top training places in the US. One of the places they feel absolutely secure in sending their people to because they know they're going to come here and they're going to get rigorous training programmes that are focused on the topic that they're supposed to be focused on.^{lx}

Two aspects to the MCI's work are seen to be particularly useful for the US federal officials also. Firstly, the MCI had a freedom from diplomatic positions to discuss weaknesses of US social, economic and political life as well as the strengths. 'The State Department people just can't say bad things about the United States and how we screwed up. They don't have anything in their programme to talk about slavery for example'.^{lxi} Secondly, the MCI is depoliticised and removed from the geopolitics of Sino-American relations. The programme is considered overwhelmingly technical in nature, making use of experts and practitioners removed from the political context, talking only of day-to-day practices and understandings of governance and economic management with a candour not possible for a diplomatically burdened federal representative.

We talk only about the United States. We never engage in discussions about US-China relations. That allowed us to be very candid actually but also to be very candid about things we do very well. Our federal system – there's so much decentralization, so many functions decentralized from the federal level – and our non-governmental organizations, we spent a lot of time

talking about those kind of things. We never talked about military or security.^{lxii}

The practitioners, such as the Maryland staff, are defined as ‘technical experts’ who were removed from the geopolitics and symbolism of US-China cooperation. Together, these elements allowed the MCI to provide a training to China that the federal organizations couldn’t, in a manner and with a candour they couldn’t offer anyone, particularly China.

The MCI’s programmes are explicitly governance related and concerned with imparting and teaching Chinese officials about the building blocks of US democratic governance; civil service ethics, transparency, scrutiny and auditing, rule of law, e-governance and state-federal and state-citizen relations. Nonetheless, the work was never put in a political context;

We never brought in political terms. Never do. Our job was to be experts. We brought in experts. We brought in peers, always. We worked very hard to make it a peer relationship.^{lxiii}

In short; ‘Everybody wanted to keep this low-key because it was working too well’.^{lxiv}

The participants from China were, from the beginning, prominent and potentially very senior.

Those early years were six-monthly programmes for mid-career executives but they were going to be moving on. They were in most cases taken out of their positions for a year, spend four months in China then six months here, then two months at an University there.

Everybody took this very seriously. These were life-changing events, they went on to be Ambassadors to other countries, to the UN, to the embassy here and to ministerial positions. Some of them are in really, really high positions now.^{lxv}

Since 1996, the MCI claim to have trained over 10,000 mid- and upper-level executives from 7 central government agencies (departments) 8 different Provinces, 5 municipal governments and a host of universities (UMD, 2015a). Of the 16 participants in a 3-month Public Administration programme in 2009 for example, every participant was either a Deputy Director, Mayor, Vice-Secretary General, Vice Chief Executive, Director

or Vice Chairman of Provincial or City governmental departments (Maryland China Initiative, 2009a).

5.5.2 Governance and public management programmes of the MCI

Initially, 60 individuals were selected from all executive levels in China for a 6-month training programmes in public management and public policy. Documentation detailing the early years, from around 1997 to 2000, is unavailable. More recent documents and interviews suggest that the longer, 6-month programmes were cut to 2-3, 3-month programmes and around 20 shorter, 1-3 week programmes per year for Chinese government officials at the turn of the century (Maryland China Initiative, 2012; 2013). Officials claim that the broad themes have remained consistent even if the details and focus has changed to keep pace with technical changes within those fields, and in response to the demands of specific groups.

The more recent menu of courses is very broad. Programmes have focused on a range of topics in four main fields; environmental protection and natural resources; higher education; public administration; and special programmes. The latter two categories involve the majority of the governance and democracy related topics. Within these fields, courses would include teaching sessions on performance management, regional and national governance, community planning, social insurance and social services, human capital management, rule of law, philanthropy development, prosecutors and judges in the American legal system, e-governance, and 'soft power diplomacy' (UMD, 2015a). While there is a substantial amount of governance teaching, much is focused on the juncture between government and economic or business management.

While the UMD offers a core set of courses, each programme is designed to meet the specific needs of the Chinese officials through a discussion and consultation process before students are selected or sent. As well as specific areas of teaching, potential visits to central or state government departments, businesses or other organizations are discussed and agreed upon as part of the programme.^{lxvi} The volume of federal, state, private and NGO organizations and departments that are within close proximity enriches what UMD can offer and must be considered a key factor in explaining why the MCI exists in College Park, MD; 'it's called our unfair advantage, being where we are. The

latest propaganda trope from our marketing people is that we are the public research university of the nation's capital'.^{lxvii}

5.5.3 *"Show and tell"*

The delivery of the courses is based on a "show and tell" method involving both classroom and 'in the field' teaching. Lectures, normally by staff from across the university detailing theory and conceptual background to the various fields make up the "tell" aspect. Concurrently, professional visits to government institutions, organizations or companies are undertaken – the "show" – to impart first-hand experience and knowledge to the visitors. As a designer of the programme explains;

This programme is designed to do training here where you can not only tell, but you can show. So our food safety [programme], again, it's a lot of show. We spent at least two weeks in the Mid-West. Not only on farms but all aspects of the food system. Literally from the field to the plate. All through the process. They not only heard about the government and the regulations and expectations was, they were in farms, in places, saw inspectors.^{lxviii}

The model for the show and tell approach came from the technical systems component of the Marshall Plan which brought European business people and manufacturers to the US on similar, "show and tell" visits to companies and mentors following the Second World War. The approach was initially proposed by individuals – who would later go on to develop the MCI – as a means of assisting the post-Soviet transition in Russia to a democratic liberal-market society. The approach was not adopted then however, "trumped" as it were by the development thinking of the time. As a designer of the method recalls; 'I had a series of meetings, mostly in Paris with the OECD where some of these debates were taking place and I was just shot down by the neoconservatives and free market and the 'let the markets do it' people'.^{lxix}

The "show and tell" approach has evidently been considered successful since implementation in UMD however, given the consistent and continued support from, and use made of it by China. MCI officials acknowledge however, that the model is not suitable for a broader roll-out. Attempts have been made to offer similar programmes on behalf of USAID, but rejected due to the in-country requirement of their development assistance;

It's their own rules. They're organized to hire me, or somebody like that, to go over and do training over there. They don't want anything in their own country...It's not that the people in development didn't understand what I was talking about, but their own regulations can't provide for this.^{lxx}

With regard to the shorter courses, a recent 9-day public administration course for example involved 10 lectures and 8 professional visits. Lectures covered topics such as budgeting and auditing, professional ethics of civil servants, private real estate development law, affordable housing finance, and performance auditing. Visits meanwhile were undertaken to the Consumer Product Safety Commission and US Department of Housing and Urban Development. But also to the Governor's Office and the Maryland General Assembly for the 'show and tell' aspect of the training (Maryland China Initiative, 2015: 2-3). Providing such a course has required a large network of staff and practitioners to be involved and willing to impart their knowledge on behalf of the MCI who in turn are little more than a node or play a coordinating rather than an educating role.

A longer-term, 3-month Public Administration programme in 2009 meanwhile consisted of 71 lectures and 27 visits. Lectures were provided by university staff and industry practitioners such as IMF consultants, CitiBank's vice president or assistant vice president of the federal Reserve bank of Richmond. A different topic was explored for each of the first 14 weeks with the majority economic related aspects of public administration (the last 4 weeks were devoted to personal research projects). These included weeks devoted to planning, budgeting and auditing, trade policy, business administration, industry and technology as well as public communication, work safety and environmental management. A third of the trips were to sub-state institutions; either directly to Maryland departments, to neighbouring sub-state (D.C. or Virginia), or to related sub-departments of Maryland in Prince George's County. The other trips were to federal departments, private companies or institutions such as the World Bank and IMF (Maryland China Initiative, 2009).

With regard to the specific use of Maryland state expertise, it is claimed that their use is common within the programmes the MCI run. Such specific records are not kept but senior university officials claim; 'I would say that a third to a half of the programmes probably have some sort of an element where somebody from the state of Maryland is

coming to talk to them. I mean it's fairly common for that [to happen]'.^{lxxi} The MCI, as coordinators of the programmes, will contact the state governmental departments to request a session with an employee and the group of students. The sessions themselves are either lectures or discussion seminars where the official will impart their knowledge and experience without any guidance or training from the MCI. The officials are considered the "expert" and are left to develop the session themselves.

5.5.4 Concluding remarks

Considering its reach, the MCI is an impressive programme, delivering training in US governance practice while, making use of sub-state expertise. The focus of the programmes themselves, decided by the Chinese and developed by the MCI, are concerned overwhelmingly with economic or business related governance. Nonetheless, issues of transparency, e-governance, rule of law, efficacy of local and regional government provision of social services, and the ethics of governance are core aspects of what the MCI offer.

It is claimed by officials that the MCI's training is something the federal level cannot engage in without political difficulty. As a university department, the MCI can provide a depoliticized training programme for Chinese officials. The support from the federal level within the US as well as the continued use made of it by Chinese officials, strongly suggests that the MCI is an acceptable proxy for both. Nonetheless, funding and programme development from China and, more directly, the state officials that conduct the training sessions and seminars are an essential elements in the MCI's ability to offer the programme and in explaining its form. Furthermore, in delivering the training, sub-state officials are imparting their own interpretations of the concepts and themes taught – without federal or even MCI direction or training.

The federal government, and Chinese funding and control are key facilitators and opportunity structures for the programme, and the UMD itself. As a democracy promotion vehicle, it is a private venture, deriving from the agency of the UMD rather than the sub-state's governance structures. However, the knowledge and content of its governance training derives from the sub-state legislature staff who take part. It is their knowledge and expertise that is subcontracted for the delivery of the democracy

promotion. In this sense, it is sub-state knowledge, and Marylandian democracy that is being promoted, albeit with foreign funding, federal consent, and through a partly public-funded university.

Agency meanwhile comes from the national and global level also, as well as locally from the individual staff members working with the MCI. The Maryland executive however, again, displays no agency.

Equally important to consider perhaps is the alternative method of delivery that characterises the training – through Marshall Plan style, “show and tell” programmes. If the MCI’s work is a success, then the ‘show and tell’ method must be understood as a key component of that success.

5.6 Federal organizations, state expertise

Maryland legislature staff have also been utilised by federal and national level agencies to provide governance expertise on their behalf, to democracy partners. The direct utilization of individuals is less formal than the subcontracting agreements and contracts held with the NCSL, and involvement is on an *ad hoc* or an “on demand” basis. Occasionally the Maryland SoS’s Office is also contacted to coordinate visits or pass the request for assistance or experts on to the various state departments.^{lxxii}

Individuals and groups are also brought to Maryland by the IRI, NDI, the State Department programmes such as the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), or Congress’ Open World Programme, explored in detail below. These are often part of broader informational or fact-finding visits to the US. Visits are often coordinated through, and passed on from, the Maryland State Department.

In these instances, legislature staff give presentations, hold semi-formal seminars and discussions with the visiting dignitaries or staff. Occasionally there are requests for the Department of Legislative Services to host a group for a day, providing a range of sessions. Reasons for the federal organizations using the sub-state experts are often due to similarities between Maryland and the partner in demographics, geography, economy or more specific, single issues like urban planning.^{lxxiii} All interviewees acknowledged the importance of the proximity of Annapolis or Baltimore to Washington D.C. An hour’s

drive from the federal headquarters makes Maryland, and to a lesser extend Virginia and Pennsylvania, ideal locations from which the federal organizations can source the sub-state 'expertise'. USAID's Rule of Law Institutional Strengthening Program similarly makes use of Maryland's, as well as Virginia's legal systems and officials, often due to the proximity to Washington D.C. (see USAID, 2015).

The IVLP is for example, administered in Maryland by the World Trade Centre Institute (WTCI). The IVLP is a State Department programme involving the hosting, across the US, of thousands of visitors; 4,661 international leaders from 192 countries in 2014 with Maryland hosting 653 of those (Global Ties, 2013: 2). Visitors are hosted by volunteers within Maryland and other states, then meet counterparts in whichever industry or profession they may be involved with to share best practice. Visitors are also introduced to governance practices and departments or are themselves parliamentarians or public servants who share best practice with Maryland counterparts. WTCI's role is in linking the visitors to the network of volunteer hosts and in connecting visitors to businesses, organizations and government officials with whom they will share good practice. WTCI makes particular use of the 'Global Ties' network of such volunteers.^{lxxiv}

Topics of discussion are frequently concerned with the legislative process, staff organization and development, state-federal relations, legislature-executive relations, and budgetary scrutiny. But there is no suggestion of message tailoring or attempts by the federal organizations to direct the content of the sessions. The state "experts" are treated as such, and are left to provide what is considered technical information to the partners. As a senior departmental official states;

No, they don't give us any directive as to what the message should be. They're usually looking for us to provide some technical information either about the legislative process or certain things that we do... So no, I don't think we get any real directive in terms of 'please say this' or 'don't say that'. No it's more a matter of 'these are the areas that they're interested in and can you provide them with an itinerary'... I've never been told by any handler, NDI, NCSL or IRI to 'hey, you can't say this or you can't say that'.^{lxxv}

Less frequently, legislature staff are invited to join projects abroad with the IRI, NDI, and State Department, again as 'experts' to provide specific, technical knowledge. Again,

little if any information about the involvement on behalf of federal organizations is recorded by the relevant department or staff. Consequently it is difficult to quantify or evaluate the volume or success of such endeavours. Trips have included an IRI visit to train Iraqi parliamentary staff (taking place in Jordan). Maryland research staff were invited to join the delegation and provide an introduction to the state legislature's non-partisan research service. Considered "technical" advice by the IRI and the staff themselves, Iraqi partners were exposed to;

...three days on how, when you get a request from a member, how do you structure the research, how do you put it in a format that is easy for them to understand, to read and digest quickly. What kind of sources do you use, what analytical tools and so forth.^{lxxvi}

On an *ad hoc* and informal basis, federal bodies have been making frequent use of sub-state officials and their expertise in their democracy promotion efforts. Records of involvement are rarely, if ever kept at the sub-state level however, and a precise quantification of sub-state involvement would require an extensive trawl through federal agency programme details.

5.6.1 Open World Program

A specific example of a federal level programme making 'use' of sub-state officials is explored in this section, namely the US Congress funded Open World Program (OWP). The OWP is an exchange programme funded by the US Congress and administered from the Library of Congress. Starting as a means of enhancing mutual understanding and cooperation with Russia in 1999, it was soon enhanced to incorporate the Ukraine, Balkan and then Central Asian countries – all of which are former Soviet states. Once more, while a federal level funded and controlled programme – though in this case the legislature – the deliverers and practitioners of governance and democracy sessions administered by the Open World Program, are all located in sub-state departments and organizations.

The official aims of the programme have remained consistent since its inception and are;

To enhance understanding and capabilities for cooperation between the United States and the countries of Eurasia by developing a network of

leaders in the region who have gained significant, firsthand exposure to America's democratic, accountable government and its free-market system (Open World, 2015).

The aims are fleshed out a little more by officials of the OWP;

To create a network of young emerging leaders. We have about 24,000 people in our network who have exposure to the US form of federalism, and we also count on our delegates when they go back to either rise in their profession, to take on projects that were inspired from their programme, maintain contacts with their professional colleagues, prepare for visits from their hosts. We just want to make sure that dialogue continues after the programme, progressive dialogue.^{lxxvii}

The programme is a mix therefore of democracy promotion, cultural diplomacy and economic connections in terms of aims. Indeed, despite the State Department recognising the OWP as a democracy promotion programme, officials regard their work as an 'exposure programme, a colleague-to-colleague programme';^{lxxviii}

Some have referred to our programmes as study tours, and we consider this to be an exchange of information and ideas. People are not here for lectures, this is not a training programme, it's for people to learn about each other's systems. Colleague-to-colleague.^{lxxix}

Indeed, officials suggest that their work complements the democracy promotion foundations due to the nature of their work and method of delivery. Furthermore, the use of the State Department as well as other democracy promotion foundations such as the NDI, IRI and the NED to nominate candidates for the programme offers a further complementary element.

The OWP is funded mainly by Congress, but also by other agencies co-financing projects, and private donations; \$8m, \$1 and a little over \$175,000 respectively in 2013 (Open World, 2013: 30-31). Congress also, via a Board of Trustees with members from both houses and the Carnegie Endowment for international Peace, develop the 4-year strategic plans. The strategic plan sets the objectives for its work. The main changes since 1999 have been the expansion in partners. The 2012-2015 strategic plan also called for a focus on young leaders leading to the administrators to target, and increase the numbers of delegates under 30 years of age to 35% (Open World, 2013: 4). The

programme keeps costs very low with volunteers hosting delegates and conducting sessions. Consequently, OWP is able to bring over 150 groups every year.

Like the State Department's IVLP programme, the administering officials are coordinators, linking nominated delegates who arrive in the US for the exchange, with volunteer hosts and professional visits during their time in the US. Democracy organizations, namely the NDI, IRI, and USAID are often consulted, alongside US embassies in partner countries, in OWP's attempts to identify suitable delegates. The OWP is thus deeply rooted in national level discourses and strategies, even if the practitioners are state level officials. Following the candidate selection process and visa vetting, the Open World Leadership Centre (administering unit based in the Library of Congress), call for proposals from voluntary organizations to host the visits. Programmes are selected based on their suitability for the delegates and their fields of interest and thematically vary widely from governance to business or NGO sector.

While in the United States, delegates take part in tailored, in-depth exchanges in themes of interest to Congress and of transnational impact, including human-trafficking prevention, government and court transparency, nuclear nonproliferation, and environmental protection. Most Open World hosting programs examine the role that legislative bodies play in these issues and in democracies, and provide opportunities for the delegates to share their expertise with their U.S. counterparts and host communities (Open World, 2015a).

Officials are confident that delegates receive an experience of US democratic culture more generally, based on their immediate experiences with volunteer groups who host and run their programmes. Democracy and governance play an important role in all programmes even if not necessarily a central one; 'we figure, through our programmes, everyone sees transparency, accountability, how people make government accountable'.^{lxxx} Sessions are conducted with the Maryland's state departments and their officials taking a lead.

In the view of officials, delegates are exposed to a particularly American democratic culture;

Politics is local. Self-determination. People are responsible for their actions and this is basically it. People should not wait for government to do something for them and this is what they see on the local level.^{lxxxi}

Another identified the agency of individuals and the role of volunteerism in the provision of social services as defining features of the democratic experience visitors receive;

One of the real key components that our folks take away with, the sense of volunteerism and being involved in your community. We've just hinted at that but they see a lot of rotary clubs, they see a lot of organizations aimed at helping handicapped. In those countries, if you are handicapped in the past, you basically stayed in your apartment and you were shut in or you were sent to an institute. Same as orphans.

If we expose people to American families and local communities, the volunteerism, then we can expect them to go home wanting to change, wanting to improve. But we're not saying 'our system's right' [or that] 'your system's wrong'.^{lxxxii}

Open World visits are carefully tailored and officials make use of expertise and volunteers from all 50 states. States offer different strengths however; Colorado and California are ideal for groups interested in water management while South Dakota seems to excel in youth volunteering groups. Maryland meanwhile offers a breath of expertise due to its demographic, geographical and economic character. Baltimore is seen and used as a centre of media and press expertise.^{lxxxiii} The University and biotech/technology corridor of the I270 offer further locations to locate visitors. With regard to governance however, Maryland's non-partisan legislature is seen as a particular strength. Finally, programmes with regard to the rule of law are often located in Maryland, due in part at least to the expertise and enthusiasm of District Court Judge Richard D. Bennett for the programme.

As an example of a specific visit, a rule of law related programme brought a delegation from Turkey in 2012;

The group had a first-hand look at the common U.S. judicial procedures of plea bargaining and warrant acquisition while at the U.S. courthouse. A tour of the Maryland State Police DNA, Gun and Drug lab followed, and the delegation visited police facilities and their staff. Discussions covered the importance of procedures in prisons and methods to reduce violence in jails (Open World, 2013: 15).

With regard to the international reception of the programme, despite an increasingly fraught global political context in its partners' region, officials claim that due to being a

legislature programme, partners are less resistant; ‘That’s one of our strengths in Russia actually, is that we’re not tied to the executive branch policies. We’re non-political, we’re in the leg[islature] branch’.^{lxxxiv} Officials also claim that the programmes are ‘non-political’.

We’re trying to do what the Russian leaders want too. They want to expose their people to Western systems with no brainwashing and no pontification, no standing on a pedestal. We might be a city on a hill, but it’s a rough hill with rocks on it.

We’re *so* non-political in Russia. We do social networks, hospitals, hospices, trafficking, environment, energy, agriculture. The things that are non-political that help build communities and societies.^{lxxxv}

The OWP is heavily reliant on volunteers. No guidance or training is imparted upon the sub-state volunteer experts however and consequently, the content of the OWP is dependent upon the individuals subcontracted to support its delivery. There is evidently an attempt to coordinate and ensure that the Open World programme is complementary of the broader democracy organizations’ work with particular partners. Nonetheless, broad generalizations regarding the ability of federal bodies to impart a consistent or deliberate message or tone to their democracy promotion is called into question if the actual, person-to-person contact involves sub-state officials in this manner.

With regard to opportunity structures, we must again note the importance of the *national level democracy organizations*. While it is Marylandian democracy that is being promoted, it is through channels and partnerships established by national level organizations that it is done so. Furthermore, the key agency comes from those national level organizations and the decision to source expertise and knowledge from the states. The only agency from the local level involves the individual volunteers, though there’s no objection to their involvement.

5.7 Conclusions

5.7.1 Opportunity structures for Maryland democracy promotion

In the Maryland case, opportunities for the state to engage in the promotion of democracy were not structured by the institutional contexts and key variables identified in the Lecours' framework. Conversely, opportunity structures in Maryland largely work to restrict its executive from engaging the state in international democracy promotion.

There is no nationalist presence in Maryland, and no significant desire on behalf of its politicians to engage in paradiplomacy for any reasons beyond economic or co-operational. Unlike Flanders, there was no desire to put Maryland on the map, its role and actorness long since defined and established, with no desire to change that at the regional level. The domestic political context did not structure opportunities to engage in international democracy promotion.

The vague constitutional allocation of competence is given specific meaning by strict and disciplining IGR which limit the types of activities that US states can engage in. The IGR operate in such a way as to restrict the states from crossing into political paradiplomacy, guarding the sovereignty of the federal government in the international realm very jealously. Though there have been periods where the structures could change, such as with regard to the Burma Law, the central state restricted and re-emphasized the limits of state involvement abroad. There is still space within the set-up however for both economic and some co-operational paradiplomacy. Maryland's powers and institutional capacity, though more developed since Reagan's move to block grant funding, cannot be mobilized to promote democracy abroad.

Representation within state foreign policy did not emerge as a pertinent factor with regard to Maryland's executive, but, as discussed in the next section, was of key importance in structuring opportunities for individuals within the Maryland state institutions. There was room for individuals motivated to promote democracy to engage in such activities abroad through State Department, Congress, USAID or other such activities initiated by central state organizations.

Supra-national political and/or economic institutions and international organizations did not structure opportunities for Maryland, but did for broader organizations such as the NCSL that then drew on expertise from Maryland. Likewise, the willingness of partners to engage in democracy activities was more pertinent for the broader organizations that subcontracted Maryland officials, as were the emulation of industry norms, the central state's foreign policy, and economic contexts.

Like Flanders, the security context at particular periods was also a key conditioning factors, again for other actors that made use of Maryland officials. The demise of the Soviet Union, alongside Clinton's less confrontational approach to foreign policy proved key factors that led to the construction of an opportunity for the National Guard to play a role in democracy promotion. Sino-American relations meanwhile are such that it may be acceptable for Chinese officials to source depoliticized sub-state "technical expertise" as an alternative to the unpalatable relations at the state-to-state level.

Ultimately the opportunity structures do not work so as to allow Maryland's executive to engage the state in democracy promotion activities abroad. The role of other actors and broader US foreign policy however, does structure situations where the subcontracting of depoliticized knowledge is a viable or even preferred option for those actors. Thus Maryland can be viewed as an opportunity structures for their democracy promotion activities

5.7.2 Agency

The Maryland case sets a challenge, to think differently about the role of agency in sub-state democracy promotion. The sub-state executive has the potential, given their resources and technical and legal competence, to become international democracy promoters like Wales or Flanders. But with opportunities for political paradiplomacy closed by the IGR, the sub-state executive cannot engage in democracy promotion activities. However, its staff, using distinctly Marylandian knowledge and expertise can be subcontracted, and is sourced by national and global forces, and mobilized in order to promote democracy.

The key agency therefore is located at the national and global levels, and not within the sub-state governance structures. National level democracy organizations have turned to sub-states in an attempt to bolster their democracy promotion activities. In other cases, global partners have been happy to source or learn from the expertise of Maryland legislature staff.

Equally pertinent is the agency of the hundreds and even thousands of individuals who have volunteered to support the national and global organizations and contribute to the promotion of democracy. In this sense, Maryland state staff and their knowledge is more of an opportunity structure for national level organizations to subcontract that knowledge. Within the Lecourian framework, the sub-state itself is an opportunity structure for national level agency.

5.7.3 Understanding the democracy promotion of Maryland

Agency from the governance structures with regard to political paradiplomacy is absent in the Maryland case. There were no domestic political forces attempting to develop the agency of the sub-state and enter into activities promoting democracy in the name of Maryland state. Maryland does not engage in the promotion of democracy as an actor. Constitutional rules are ambiguous but their understanding is clear; that political international relations is a realm for the federal government. There has been no opportunity for, and no agency from the governance and executive structures of the state. We may not therefore refer to Maryland state as a democracy promotion actor.

Maryland's officials have however been utilized as tools by the broader democracy promotion industry. When used, they bring their distinctive Maryland experience to the promotion of democracy on behalf of other partners. Furthermore, they enable the development of democracy promoting organizations and activities that engage with difficult partners – too difficult for the central state. In the Maryland case, personal agency was of paramount importance and the willingness of Maryland officials to engage in projects voluntarily, on behalf of other organizations was a key element.

Maryland's expertise is valued and used by federal level democracy organizations. The expertise is considered different to what other sources can provide as it derives from

the practice of democratic governance on the sub-state level. We can even begin to identify the model or at least the aspects of democracy promoted by Maryland, and sourced by the democracy organizations. Themes of transparency, scrutiny of legislation, accountability, and oversight are consistent areas where Maryland officials are involved in imparting their knowledge and expertise.

Individuals interviewed were consistent in their suggestions that the states were ‘good at’ the themes they were frequently contracted to develop with partners. Indeed some even suggested that states were the best or even only locations where such knowledge could be acquired or taught. The officials were, in fact, the only people who could teach these technicalities of democratic governance. In the words of one legislature staff member;

...there’s no real college course in how do you draft legislation. In law schools there is some, but again, we train, we really train them on the mechanics of it all. How you use our software to draft. Same for budget analysis and for fiscal; there’s training that goes on. Once they’re trained, then they should be able to impart that and how they do their work without any trouble.^{lxxxvi}

Unfortunately, without a more ambitious project to collect and record the experiences of the hundreds or possibly thousands of individuals who have, over the past decades, engaged in such volunteerism, it is difficult to present a more precise notion of their understandings of democracy beyond the themes within which they are contracted to engage.

Turning to the democracy and federal organizations, and networks that make use of Maryland democracy promotion, it is more difficult to claim that those organizations are promoters of a specific model of democracy, at least not deliberately. There is little control over the Maryland officials or their message ‘in the room’ with partners, and no attempts to manipulate them beforehand. This is not to claim that Maryland democracy promotion does not run along similar or even exactly the same lines as other models of democracy being promoted. Nor to suggest that it isn’t possible to identify a relatively coherent model amongst US promoters. But it is to claim that any coherence between the Maryland democracy promotion elements within the programmes, and the broader programmes themselves, are more coincidental than deliberate.

Understanding Maryland's democracy promotion is consequently more difficult than the other cases as the sub-state has not been mobilized as an actor. Beyond economic matters, Maryland does not pursue foreign policy goals through international activities. Its (sub-)national interests are not therefore pursued through foreign policy or by promoting democracy or engaging in international development. There is no agency from the sub-state's executive structures. Indeed, there was no evidence of even a desire to do so, or a conception of how it would be possible, even if desired. Agency came from individuals who, as officials and experts in sub-state governance, are sought by national level democracy organizations for their unique knowledge. The medium is always dictated by those subcontracting organizations, as are the broad themes of the knowledge that Maryland officials will transfer.

While Maryland democracy promotion is not an activity for the state, it is a resource "tapped into" and used by the broader industry. Doing so offers many advantages to that industry, from being able to bypass political obstructions, to providing a specialized knowledge of democratic governance. Maryland's staff in this sense, can be understood as an opportunity structure for agency located at other levels.

Chapter 6: Wales

This last case study chapter will examine the democracy promotion activities of Wales' new governance institutions after devolution in 1997. It will generate data for a comparative analysis and better understanding of sub-state democracy promotion, the basis for answering the third research question. Once more, and in keeping with the first two cases, the domestic structure emphasized by Lecours will be examined by way of introduction. The chapter will then explore specific instances of democracy promotion. Beginning with the executive, then moving on to the legislature which, unlike the other cases, emerges as a distinct actor. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of the democracy promotion activities of Wales, how they are understood through the Lecourian framework, and a brief understanding of Wales as a democracy promoter. It will argue that Wales has promoted democracy in a variety of ways, both implicitly and explicitly, but is also, like Maryland in the previous chapter, a source of knowledge and subcontracted expertise for broader democracy promoters.

6.1.1 Wales, devolution and 'inclusive democracy'

Wales' incorporation into the English, later United Kingdom dates back many centuries, but the persistence of an element of exceptionalism to the governance of Wales has proved a defining feature throughout its political history. From the Acts of Union, through Oliver Cromwell's addressing of the Catholic question, to the continued debate regarding constitutional reform and devolution; Welsh society and culture has consistently exhibited different, exceptional aspects to the rest of the Kingdom(s). It's not quite the same. In turn, this has warranted different, exceptional treatment in its governance. During the period of administrative devolution to specifically Welsh, 'sub-departments' of state – the manner in which the exceptionalism was accounted for and addressed by the Westminster government during the 20th century – a firm principle, well established was succinctly articulated;

Time and again we were made to realise that the problems of administration in certain fields were different from those in England and that there was therefore a clear and unmistakable need to secure for Wales a different system of administrative arrangements to deal with these special problems (Council for Wales and Monmouthshire, 1959: Para. 13).

Welsh exceptionalism had, albeit reluctantly, become an accepted principle of governance within the Westminster government. Executive devolution and a democratization of the functions of the Welsh Office (a department of State established in 1964 to coordinate governance in Wales) was rejected at a referendum in 1979 after it ‘...exited a conservative reaction inimical to institutional reform and stimulated the widespread hostility of organised interests’ (Jones and Wilford, 1983: 218). Crucially however, the referendum ‘...failed to resolve the issue of Welsh devolution’ (Jones and Wilford, 1983: 222), not only because, as those authors suggest, referendums rarely decide matters once and for all, but due also to the inescapable fact that administrative devolution was to continue and proliferate over the next two decades.

Over its final 20 years it [the Welsh Office] developed into a multi-functional ministry carrying out the majority of non benefit-related, revenue raising and social security government functions in Wales (Deacon, 2002: 39).

This latter period of intensified administrative devolution during the 1980s coincided with a period of crisis for the British state; a time of exclusive party government, of a highly centralized state and few if any effective checks on that executive (Hirst and Barnett, 1993: 6). This was particularly seen to be the case in Wales when Conservative Ministers administered policy through the centralized Welsh Office, without the backing of an electoral majority in Wales. A tight grip of dubious legitimacy was seen to be kept on the wider governance and policy structures of Wales through friendly appointments to quasi autonomous non-governmental organizations (QUANGOs) which by the 1990s had come to administer and develop policy for large sections of the public sector in Wales. The British state’s governance in Wales was facing a crisis of legitimacy. This crisis gave an opportunity firstly for executive devolution to be placed back onto the political agenda if it were presented as a potential solution to the crisis (Morgan and Mungham, 2000), and secondly to construct a new political climate (see Chaney, Hall and Pithouse, 2001).

6.1.2 The new, ‘Welsh’ democracy and crisis of legitimacy

Devolution was re-understand by its proponents within the Labour party which by 1997 was the UK’s governing party. The new devolution was to embody values and themes which would offer a solution to the governance crisis – what was dubbed the

‘democratic deficit’ present in Wales (Osmond, 1995). Its proponents pressed claims that devolution would establish a ‘new, more inclusive and participative democracy in Britain’ (Welsh Office, 1997: 3). A referendum on these proposals, held in September 1997, was proposed by the then new, Labour UK government. The electorate were in favour of the proposal by 559,419 (50.3%) to 552,698 (49.7%) against, a margin of only 6,721 (0.6%) with a 50.1% turnout; ‘little short of a miracle’ (Morgan and Mungham, 2000: 195).

With such a small mandate, the lack of legitimacy dominated public attitudes toward the new institution (see Pattie, Seyd and Whiteley, 2004: 37; Scully and Wyn Jones, 2016: 516). The institution’s legitimacy would be seen to be tied to the extent to which a ‘new democracy’ could be realized. Consequently, the development of ‘inclusivity’ goes hand in hand with the development of the institution;

To generate a sense of legitimacy for the National Assembly...The success or failure of this task seems to largely depend on the ability of those involved in the devolution process to turn the rhetoric of inclusivity that has characterized Welsh politics since the 1997 general election into reality (Wyn Jones and Trystan 1999: 90).

Although central to the arguments in favour of devolution, there had been little, if any critical engagement with the concept of ‘inclusive democracy’ during the first, referendum-winning phase;

Nor was their pre-devolution utterance ever accompanied by a systematic attempt to unpack what these desirable ideas might mean in practice or a forecast of the tangible benefits they might bring (Chaney, Hall and Pithouse, 2001: 3).

Pre-referendum, inclusivity was an ideal or a value, espoused by the proponents of a ‘Yes’ vote. Post-referendum, the designers of devolution would be pressed to make good on the promises, particularly considering the razor-thin majority.

The further development of the concept of ‘inclusive democracy’ and its realization would therefore play a key role in constructing the legitimacy of the institution and the new form that democracy would take in Wales. Extensive efforts were made by Secretary of State, Ron Davies to crystalize and articulate its values. The National Assembly Advisory Group (NAAG) was established just three months after the

referendum. It may have been more of a symbolic than substantive part of the development of the inclusivity agenda, as the political context and continued hostility toward devolution form within the Labour party itself forced Ron Davies to keep a firm grip on the direction of the concept (see Chaney and Fevre, 2001). Nevertheless;

The membership was drawn up in such a way that every item of the agenda of inclusiveness could be checked off: political pluralism, gender, geography, pressure groups, business and trade unions (Chaney and Fevre, 2001: 28).

Following the referendum therefore, 'inclusivity' was fleshed out;

It came to signify liberal concerns about fostering democratic participation, respecting pluralism, advancing equality, ending marginalization, reinventing a Welsh culture that is meaningful and embracing to all citizens, and developing a new mode of politics that is consensual and less adversarial (Chaney and Fevre, 2001: 31).

Welsh democracy and devolution was therefore not a simple transfer of functions to a democratically elected executive. It was predicated upon, and legitimized by the extent to which it produced a specific, more 'inclusive' form of democratic governance in Wales. The extent to which the discourse and institutions of Welsh devolution have gone to embody and manifest the values of 'inclusivity', reflects the need to generate legitimacy for the broader concept of Welsh devolution.

6.1.3 Institutionalizing 'inclusivity'

Alongside the conceptual development, early steps were taken both to quantify and measure progress towards this 'inclusivity' (Chaney and Fevre, 2001: 31-32), and to institutionalize the values of the new democracy in the GOW Act 1998 and broader 'set-up' of the new devolved structure. However, it was also a consensus settlement to appease those still hostile to devolution within the Labour party. The resulting institution has been characterised as a having a 'strange anatomy' (Rawlings, 2003a) but also one which was also designed to develop with time (Rawlings, 2003b: 3). With regard to powers, only specific secondary legislation in 18 fields – not foreign policy – could be passed by the body with the emphasis therefore on effective policymaking rather than legislation. The innovation of the Act came in the detail, and the attempt to develop and institutionalize inclusivity.

An element of proportional representation was introduced to the electoral system in order to foster cross-party support. Section 107 of the Act placed a statutory duty on the institution not to act contrary to the European Convention on Human Rights. Section 115 required the Assembly to consult with businesses on the impact of its functions. Clauses 48 and 120 placed a statutory duty to ensure equality of opportunity, a legal institutionalization strengthened with the establishment of the Standing Committee on Equality of Opportunity and an Equality Policy Unit within the Assembly.

Further statutory duties to promote bilingualism and sustainable development were enshrined in the act. Openness was pursued through the practices of the new institution with cabinet minutes being published as well as extensive documentation of the proceedings – all bilingually. Parties were invited by the Secretary of State to work toward gender balancing in their candidate selection processes. Efforts were extended to fostering inclusivity within civil society by establishing bodies such as the All Wales Ethnic Minority Association (AWEMA) to coordinate and assist ethnic minorities to engage with the policy process.

Even the GOW Act 1998 itself originally conceived of a single body corporate (HMSO, 1998), sharing the responsibility for governing Wales through the consensus generated by the new politics, and supported by the contribution of a civil society revitalized by inclusive devolution (Royles, 2007:2-3). At an early stage, some elements of this more ‘inclusive’ democracy have arguably been realized, as in the field of gender parity for example (see Betts, Borland and Chaney, 2001). But other elements such as the notion of a more consensual political culture quickly failed to materialize (see Balsom, 2000: 35), as the underestimated influence of Westminster parliamentarianism dragged the infant institution toward a more adversarial, British model of practicing politics (see Rawlings, 2003b).

6.1.4 De facto and de jure reforms, 2000-2007

The early years of the infant institution was a period of complex turmoil, difficult to introduce in brief, but important to the consequent constitutional reforms. The body corporate ideal failed to materialise in practice, not least due to the oppositional and ‘Westminster-like’ nature of the party-political setting (Rawlings, 2003b), and the then

First Secretary⁶, Alun Michael's 'cautious and centralist, a very personal or "hands-on" style of management' (Rawlings, 2003b: 5). Having achieved a bitter and dividing victory for leadership of the Labour party and the Assembly (see Flynn, 1999), but failed to achieve a majority in the 1999 elections, Michael's unpopular leadership fell victim to party politics, and his resignation was forced by a threat of a vote of no confidence in February 2000.

Replacing Michael was Rhodri Morgan who quickly moved the institution, with cross-party consensus in the form of a review of procedures (see NAFW, 2002; Chaney, Hall, and Pithouse, 2001: 13) along its constitutional trajectory toward a *de facto*, but not *de jure*, government and opposition model (Rawlings, 2003b). A Labour-Liberal Democrat coalition 'Welsh Assembly Government' (WAG) from 2000-2003, and a Labour majority administration from 2003-2007, faced a Plaid Cymru led opposition. Meanwhile, an empowered and well-resourced Office of the Presiding Officer (akin to a "speaker of the house"), strengthened the independence of the legislature from the WAG.

Following independent reviews and consistent political pressure for reform, the 2006 Government of Wales Act was drawn up and enacted following the 2007 election (and consequent establishment of the second coalition government, this time involving Labour and the nationalists, Plaid Cymru). The Act legally separated the executive and the legislature and created the 'Commission of the Assembly' as a body to lead and manage the latter alongside the Presiding Officer. This creation brought to an end the period of extensive control wielded by the Presiding Officer over the legislature's resources which had lasted since the *de facto* reforms of 2000. The establishment of a Commission also led to a formalization of the legislature's activities; objectives and strategies designed by the Commission and published publically in the name of the Commission as opposed to being decided by the Presiding Officer.

The key development during the Third Assembly (2007-2011) was the holding of a referendum and a move to 'Part Four' of the GOW Act 2006, which bestowed primary legislative powers upon the institution. The 2011 referendum itself produced a resounding 'yes', by 517,132 (63.49%) votes to 297,380 (36.51%) with a 35.63%

⁶ The role would later be called 'First Minister'

turnout. In the eyes of First Minister Carwyn Jones, an old man had come of age. Crucially for the institution, its legitimacy had been solidified through popular referendum.

6.1.5 IGR

The democracy promotion activities examined in this chapter were established during a period characterised by a lack of consistency, personal relations, and *ad hoc* approach to IGR. Several perceived weaknesses and inadequacies have been highlighted with regard to the IGR in this period (see House of Lords, 2002; NAFW 2002).

The Richard Commission in particular, established by the Labour-Liberal Democrat coalition in 2000 after the collapse of Michael and the corporate body, offered a comprehensive exposition of IGR. It concluded that they were characterised by a lack of understanding among Whitehall officials of the complexities and variation regarding the constitutional settlement; the lack of consistency in the manner in which various Whitehall departments dealt with the WAG; and the dependence upon goodwill and personal relations (Richard Commission, 2004: 146–147).

Some have been more blunt, suggesting that Wales and Whitehall had in this period; ‘...barely made it to having “functional” intergovernmental relations, given the level of disengagement of most departmental ministers and their senior officials’ (Trench 2008, 225), while others highlight the *ad hoc* nature of the relations (Royles and Wyn Jones, 2012: 255). As will be noted, the flexibility and *ad hoc* nature on the one hand enables central government to maintain a controlling grip on the devolution settlement (see Swenden, 2006). On the other, as detailed in the case of Wales for Africa, it can allow for compromises where agreement can be established (see Royles and Wyn Jones, 2012). The IGR in the Welsh case present both opportunities for, and potential constraints upon the development of paradiplomatic activities.

6.1.6 Foreign affairs

Welsh international activity did not begin with the advent of devolution. The Welsh Development Agency’s (WDA) remit permitted international visits, promotional activity and the marketing of Wales as a location for business since 1976, while the Wales

Tourist Board also acted internationally in pursuit of its specific remit. The Welsh Office took a lead in lobbying the EU policy structures, developing relations with other nations and regions around the globe both informally, and through six Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs). International activity was conducted through civil society; Dolen Cymru Lesotho's development links; historical cultural links with the Patagonia region; Cymru-Cuba and Wales Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign links and, as will be discussed below, a scattered host of smaller development and aid projects between communities in Wales and communities in Sub-Saharan Africa (see Thomas, 1998: 377). John Davies (2007: 671) meanwhile, argued that the genesis of a Welsh 'foreign policy' can be traced to the 1982 Mercator Programme, fostering language, media, publishing, and cultural networks; a Welsh attempt to develop the bilingual agenda internationally.

While not strategically coordinated therefore, Welsh international economic and co-operational activity existed and there were structures present for the pursuit of a variety of activities. The new devolved settlement would reflect and enable the continuation of Welsh international activity rather than reforming or starting afresh Wales' international role in foreign affairs.

The rules dictating the conduct of foreign affairs of the Welsh Government meanwhile has, since the start, been set by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which details in the form of 'soft law', the conventions and rules for officials in Cardiff and London with regard to functions not specified in the legislation. Within the MoU, the Concordat on International Relations states quite clearly where the competence lies;

...the United Kingdom Government is responsible for international relations. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs is responsible for the foreign policy of the United Kingdom...The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) promotes the international interests of the United Kingdom and all its constituent parts (UK Government, 2013: 47).

Provisions exist for Welsh input into UK foreign policy and EU relations however, allowing for a continuation of pre-devolutionary practices. The Assembly, and latterly its government would also develop and support international activities beyond and exceptional to those specified by the MoU and concordat on international relations. They are detailed below, but their development can be characterised and understood as

a continuation and development of pre-devolutionary activities rather than anything born of the new structures.

The key difference however is that the activities have become more strategically coordinated, better supported, and resourced following devolution. Crucially, devolution established the Welsh Government as a key actor in Wales with the legal basis, the resources, and opportunities to facilitating the continuation of pre-devolutionary international activities, both economic and co-operational. The incorporation of the functions of QUANGOs such as the WDA for example, have strengthened its capacity to become this actor, and activities have also proliferated with time as MoUs and economic cooperation agreements have been signed with various regions and states (see Royles, 2010). There is also a single instance of political paradiplomacy in the form of its international development programme, discussed at length in this chapter.

The WAG was not the only actor created and empowered by the move toward a government and opposition model. The reform led to the creation of a separated, operationally independent and well-resourced Office for the Presiding Officer (PO). Though with no pre-designed or institutionalized role in international affairs, the Presiding Officer himself would prove instrumental in shaping the office into an explicit promoter of Welsh democracy both domestically and internationally. Specifically, the PO directed the work of the International Relations Team (IRT). The IRT also supports Assembly Members in their broader international activities such as exchanging knowledge and sharing good practice with other legislative organisations (NAfW, 2014a); supporting the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's branch within the Assembly; engaging with the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly; and participating in the Conference of European Regional Legislature Assemblies (CALRE).

The devolution settlement itself therefore restricts all but a continuation of pre-devolutionary international activities – economic and co-operational paradiplomacy. Insofar as constitutional powers for international activity therefore, devolution is not a direct critical juncture – the rules were not reformed. It is a key event however in that it has created and empowered new actors who have been endowed with the resources

and an international infrastructure – the capacity to become international actors. Offices, staff, contacts and other resources enabled it to act in various fields outside Wales.

6.1.7 Regional politics and nationalist parties

The post-devolution political context in Wales has been dominated by a Labour party struggling to achieve a majority, with coalitions becoming a common feature. Party-competition between Labour and their rivals, particularly the nationalist party, Plaid Cymru (Plaid) who performed strongly in 1999, has been dominated by debate regarding the reform of the devolution settlement, shunting Wales along its constitutional trajectory. Plaid have been a consistent and major presence within the political context, though not the dominating and governing force witnessed in the case of the NVA in Flanders.

After a strong performance by Plaid in 1999, Labour's counter-punch was manifested by an adoption of a new and distinctive, soft-nationalist rhetoric and position and a 'rebranding of the Wales Labour Party as "the true party of Wales"' (Wyn Jones and Trystan, 2001: 18). It also involved attacks on Plaid as inward-looking or xenophobic nationalists (see Wyn Jones, 2014: 73), which was aided by a toxic immigration debate during the early 2000s (see Brooks, 2006; Edwards, 2016). Plaid's recovery in the 2007 elections resulted in a coalition deal with Labour for their first and only term in government. The 2011 elections, set to the backdrop of a conservative UK government, pushed the party to third place, and Labour into a minority administration.

Successive governments have concentrated largely upon the economic and cultural aspects of international relations with a few key exceptions. Firstly, the development and launch of the Wales for Africa programme is discussed in detail in this chapter. Secondly, the Labour-Plaid coalition government changed its tone, placing an emphasis on highlighting international successes such as its representation at the EU (see BBC Website, 2008b), but itself presided over a decrease of funding and withdrawal of investment into international economic ventures. Generally however, international affairs does not constitute a key electoral 'battleground' and is rarely a topic of political debate.

Wales' government has some flexibility in its budget, and some *institutional capacity* to engage internationally. *There is a nationalist party*, that has enjoyed limited electoral success, sharing power on one occasion. Wales has no *constitutional competence* in the realm of international relations, though some pre-devolutionary activities, particularly economic have been allowed to continue, and the *IGR* remain semi-formal and flexible enough to accommodate such exceptions. There is no official *input into UK foreign policy* but the UK is a member of the EU. The *UK promotes democracy* and the activity is part of its foreign policy agenda.

This chapter will now explore the democracy promotion activities of the executive and legislature in post-devolution Wales.

6.2 The Welsh Government

This section will explore the activities of the WAG (Welsh Government after an official change of name in 2011). A notable aspect of the WAG's engagement internationally has been its reluctance to involve itself in political matters. This restraint will be examined, followed by a detailed exploration of the Government's 'Wales for Africa' programme; an international development programme that has, over its lifetime, grown to incorporate the norms and practices of the global development industry, in turn contributing to the promotion of good governance and democracy abroad.

6.2.1 Government restraint: 'a serious partner in pursuit of our legitimate work'

The executive has been presented with numerous opportunities to engage in "soft" democracy promotion through its diplomacy. Opportunities arise for the WAG to align with particular values, to condemn the non-democratic actions of other states and regions. Furthermore, bilateral relations with states 'regressing' on their democratic development offer an opportunity and potential justification to attach 'negative linkages' to its development aid. In each case however, the executive has refrained from engaging in political paradiplomacy due mainly to the strict rules of devolution – well observed by all – backed by the particular intergovernmental relations.

There is a growing confidence among civil servants regarding the legitimacy of Wales as an international actor in pursuit of its domestic interests. They are however, very clear in drawing the boundaries of competence for international activity;

We don't have responsibility for foreign affairs. The responsibility for foreign affairs is not devolved and that remains with the UK government and Ministers are very keen to observe that delineation of competence. What we do have devolved to us is economic development and a whole series of domestic policies. And it's in relation to that that we have the opportunity to act externally in pursuit of our economic interests and in pursuit of our domestic policy interests where they have an international dimension .lxxxvii

This strict demarcation is emphasized time and again by Government staff and by Ministers;

...we take our cue from the Government of Wales act – the GOW act is the legislation which defines the limits of devolution and responsible government demands that we recognize the GOW act and that's what Ministers here are very keen to do...

...Ministers here have been very conscious of the need to not go beyond our competence and in my experience they've not wanted to go beyond our competence....

...[it's the] Ministers here that take a decision on where to draw the line but based on their clear understanding of the legislation... lxxxviii

Nationalists, as Lecours and Moreno (2003) propose, see great value in international activity, perceiving it as a means of pursuing core objectives. Indeed, as one Plaid official claims;

People know of Wales through rugby because we're treated on a par with other rugby playing countries. If we're treated on a par with other countries in other fields as well then it improves the national standing of the country and knock-on effects to trade and cultural and other links as well. That of course, being a nationalist party, we support and other parties presumably don't. lxxxix

However, when in government as part of the One Wales coalition Government with Labour from 2007-2011, Plaid still observed the strict demarcation of powers and respect the primacy of the UK government in the realm of political diplomacy. As a government advisor of the period suggests;

There had been much discussion before we came into government and while we were in government regarding China relations, and the obvious tensions that arose from China in terms of human rights in China, and what the Welsh Government should be saying about these things, if anything, while on visits. I remember those discussions and I remember a recognition that it was important that it be raised but that there was some feeling that 'well that would be the role of the Government in Westminster', the Welsh government's role was, more or less, to actively create business relations...^{xc}

The above statement was made in relation to Chongqing province in China with whom the WAG had signed a Memorandum of Understanding and a 'cooperation agreement' with regard to economic development. In 2008, pressure mounted from human rights campaigners such as Amnesty International for the WAG to condemn abuses in Chongqing (see Shipton, 2008; Williamson, 2008). A decision was made not to condemn the abuses and a deliberately obtuse response offered by the government; 'The question of whether to engage with China or ignore China is one that people in politics and business in the Western world have pondered for over 50 years now' (BBC Website, 2008). In arriving at such a response, the WAG, at the political level, deliberately prioritized the economic relationship and relinquished the opportunity to express a particular set of human rights values internationally. The WAG, regardless of which political colour, prioritises its economic paradiplomacy, and chooses not to risk relations with political statements.

Another incident where pressure was placed on the Government to express a political or democracy-related international statement, involved the passing of anti-homosexual legislation in Uganda in 2014, with which Wales was engaged in a development partnership. Pressure was placed on the Government to criticise and consider withdrawing its development support if the Ugandan government pressed forward with its anti-homosexual legislation (see Brooks, 2014). The Welsh Government had decided not to adjust or review the partnership with Uganda – deliberately not attaching what the democracy promotion literature would refer to as a 'negative linkage' to their international assistance. The First Minister, only after a long silence with regard to the legislation, felt the need to make reference to the matter during his visit. The reference it finally made however was an expression of UK Government policy, not the independent view of the First Minister or Welsh Government;

...the First Minister made remarks about human rights in the context of a speech he made in Uganda and the way in which he did that, the tone and the style and the message was by agreement with the UK government because we recognize that it is for them to provide the line to us.^{xci}

Similarly, even when pressured and when a viewpoint is expressed in Welsh public life, the Welsh Government will not make statements contrary to the UK Government's position on international matters. In a park, yards from the First Minister's private office in Cardiff sits a monument to the Armenian victims of Ottoman atrocities in 1915. The cross, the rondel and the commemoration plaque upon the monument, unveiled by the then PO, Dafydd Elis Thomas, are in Welsh slate with a tri-lingual inscription reading; 'In memory of the victims of the Armenian Genocide'. However, when repeatedly called upon by Armenian and Turkish communities to recognize or deny the atrocities as a 'genocide', the Welsh Government takes instead the UK Government terminology of 'atrocities', and refuse to recognize a genocidal element to the atrocities.

In a domestic setting however, such as during First Minister's Questions sessions at, the Welsh Government has no aversion to invoking the normative value of its contributions around the world in fields such as international development where Wales has a 'legitimate' space to act;

As far as we are concerned, we take the issue [of international development] —[Interruption.] He can try to shout as much as he wants, but I will tell him this now: let him go to Uganda to tell people there that he would take funding away from them. Let him go to tell people in Uganda that he would scrap the Wales for Africa programme. Then he can go to tell people in Wales how 'dynamic' he is to take money away from some of the most worthy projects anywhere in the world. Is that not typical of the Tories? They never change (NAfWb, 2014).

The remark was made in response to Conservative party calls to abandon the development work being undertaken in the Mbale region of Uganda.

The understanding of the devolution settlement is a clear factor in explaining the decisions of Welsh officials and Ministers to consistently refrain from making political statements or politicizing their broader activities. The Memorandum of Understanding's Concordat on International Relations between the two institutions states; '...the United Kingdom Government is responsible for international relations' (UK Government, 2013:

43). The strict interpretation of competence in fields such as foreign policy and diplomatic statements severely restricts the Welsh Government's capacity to promote democracy through "soft" measures such as diplomatic statements. Furthermore, the strict line does not allow the Welsh Government to politicize its development programme by attaching negative linkages without breaking the established rule that such activity is the domain of the UK government alone.

Reinforcing the strength of the 'rules' surrounding political paradiplomacy is the nature of the intergovernmental relations. Breaking the "rules" and politicizing Welsh paradiplomacy would be seen by officials as opening a 'potential can of worms',^{xcii} not with regard to the international reaction but in relation to the UK government's reaction. The relationship operates on a *quid pro quo* basis, depending at best, on a mutual respect for the principle of 'non-intervention' in each other's competences established by officials. Wyn Jones and Royles go further, suggesting that '[i]n the international realm, at least, the central state is clearly guarding its prerogatives jealously' and that the intergovernmental relations are a means of guarding the UK's prerogatives, securing and 'disciplining' as well as facilitating activities (Wyn Jones and Royles, 2012: 266). Data from this project supports this interpretation of Welsh IGR, and emphasises the structuring role they play with regard to paradiplomacy.

Nonetheless, there are very few, if any instances of Westminster interference, "warnings", or coercion. If disciplining the sub-state government is the aim then there is also an element of self-disciplining on behalf of Welsh officials present. Path dependency is a useful concept if we seek an explanation; the UK government has always led on political activity internationally and devolution was no critical juncture or mediating event with regard to the rules of international competences. Political statements by the Welsh executive are therefore avoided or, at most, simply reflect the UK government's position on matters.

In this sense, UK democracy promotion is at least officially and explicitly, the domain of the central government, and its associated institutions. The disciplining nature of the intergovernmental relations and the adherence of the government to the rules reinforce the strength of technically soft-law and IGR. Wales is denied agency with regard to

promoting democracy and the realm of political international relations; a realm guarded by the central government.

6.3 Wales for Africa (WfA)

The Welsh Government has an international development programme, launched in 2006, which has come to emulate the practices and approaches of the global community of development practitioners and consequently, begun to implicitly promote good governance and democracy. The ambiguity of the devolution settlement and flexibility of the intergovernmental relations have enabled the Welsh Government to secure justification within the strict rules of foreign policy to establish the programme. The historical context surrounding its genesis and the implications of the legal basis upon which it was constructed, has a direct impact on the activities funded by the programme.

6.3.1 Legal and motivational basis

Before the AMs sat for the first time, there were suggestions that the Assembly could support the plethora of existing community development links and diaspora communities and contribute more overtly to overseas development (Thomas, 1998: 377). This case for Government support of the existing, pre-devolutionary ‘grass roots’ development organizations achieved cabinet support through individuals such as Sue Essex, Jane Davidson and ultimately the then First Minister, Rhodri Morgan.^{xciii} UK level DfID Ministers, Labour’s Hilary Benn and Gareth Thomas, made up the essential Whitehall element of the political consensus supporting the initiative (Royles, 2010: 157).

Extensive efforts were made, facilitated by the good relations between the governments (both Labour) to justify firstly the legal basis for the programme, but also that it would “add value” to the UK’s development work. In short; ‘WAG would not have been able to pursue ‘Wales for Africa’ were it not for the agreement of the UK government, and in particular the Department for International Development’ (Wyn Jones and Royles, 2012: 260-261). After ‘wading through legislation’ and every particular action checked with lawyers to exploit the devolution settlement, the concept of ‘mutual benefit’; ‘became

central to justifying WAG's actions...' (Wyn Jones and Royles, 2012: 260). The activity was permitted so long as Welsh practitioners were also benefitting from the partnerships.

The unique legal solution which enables the programme also shapes and conditions the activities that are possible. Funding cannot be directed outside of Wales, thus the development groups and programmes in Wales are in receipt of any funding or support. Community groups and the public sector in Wales become the recipients, not organizations based abroad. Programmes must also be monitored to ensure 'mutual benefit' to the developer as well as the developed. In this sense, the Welsh international development scheme differs from the Flemish, which is much more state-like. It also allows, or arguably forces the Welsh programme to develop more innovatively.

While IGR are normally the barrier for the Government, where consensus can be built the ambiguity of the devolution settlement can be exploited to enable the WAG to engage in broader paradiplomatic activity. That consensus need not be dependent upon coexistence either – UK Ministers suggest that in a policy field which is outsourced and not politicized, such a proposal would be welcome by a UK Government of any colour.^{xciv}

As noted, the explicit motivations for the programme, expressed by the Government ministers of the time, were rooted in a desire to assist the grassroots development partnerships. However it has also been argued that there is a distinctly domestic, party-political motivation behind the Wales for Africa programme. Royles' exploration of the programme uncovered 'suggestions that competition between Welsh Labour and Plaid Cymru initially influenced this policy' (2010: 159). Interviews suggested that WfA allowed the Labour Government to project an outward-looking, progressive, internationalist personality. Strategically, this was to coincide with their depiction of their main competitors, Plaid Cymru, as inward-looking nationalists, an effort aided by a language-migration row within the nationalist party during the same period (see Brooks, 2006; Edwards, 2016; Wyn Jones, 2014: 73). For Labour, an international development programme was an ideal means of projecting a particular personality, not only internationally, but to a domestic audience.

6.3.2 Strategy and development over time

The broad strategic objective adopted by the WAG for its development programme was of contributing to the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); the "in" concept of development while WfA was being developed. The Gleneagles G8 and 'Make Poverty History' campaign provided the "mood music" (see Welsh Assembly Government, 2004: 21). Strictly speaking however, there was no detailed strategic plan mapping out the steps to achieving the objective. WfA is not a holistic approach to international development, it is a grant administration programme aimed at supporting and meeting the needs of Welsh civil society. In the words of one senior civil servant; 'we're not on a mission. We are what we are, we seek to encourage more people to do more, of better quality'.^{xcv} WfA aims to encourage the contribution of Welsh civil society to meeting the MDGs by supporting with funding, training, promoting, sharing best practice and building the capacity of NGOs (Welsh Government, 2014b). A means of helping Welsh civil society and the WAG to "do" development.

Even by 2016, after a review of the programme prompted by the UN's move away from MDGs toward Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the strategy remains vague and broad in focus. The aim was refined to focus development programmes in the following fields; 'Health and wellbeing', 'Climate change and the environment', 'Lifelong learning', 'Sustainable livelihoods', 'Involving the most marginalised groups', 'Supporting cultural exchanges among individuals', and 'Creating innovative solutions for communities living in poverty' (Hub Cymru Africa, 2016). Few instances of development partnership will fail to fall into at least one of those broad categories.

This strategic vagueness is deliberate for three reasons. Firstly, the WfA team retains control of the project – ultimately deciding upon the projects being funded and the direction the programme takes. It is recognized amongst the development community that this control allows a strong hand when the WfA management negotiates funding within the broader department.^{xcvi} The vagueness also allows the programme to fund and support the broadest range of activities. Indeed it is claimed that simply helping Welsh civil society to "do" development is the true aim of the programme; Rhodri Morgan once described the programme's aims to a Committee as no more than 'few

drops of water—that is, public funding—and encouraging the civil society efforts that are already ongoing.’ (NAfW, 2010). Finally, the “vagueness” enables the programme management to pursue the original, political objective of WfA; to align with and articulate particular values, of being ‘outward-looking’ global citizens (Royles, 2010: 158), a notion still articulated in the literature to this day (Wales for Africa, 2013).

Although the political context of the early 2000s has moved on, the future direction and development of the programme has rarely been (re-)articulated, and no political lead has been forthcoming. By the Third Assembly of 2007-2011, interest in the programme had waned. Just one debate was held in plenary while cabinet interest in the programme had almost disappeared. As a senior government advisor notes; ‘...it came up [in cabinet meetings], but not in any proactive way. It was just one of those programmes that went along’.^{xcvii} Or in the words of a long-serving official;

It’s supportive, but I’d say, throughout my time, it’s a nice thing the Welsh government does, but it doesn’t really challenge us... There has been a tendency, because it’s been nice, Assembly Members and their communities are doing nice things, it’s quite interesting. But it hasn’t gone much beyond that. It’s a nice programme, doing good stuff. But it’s never really grown.^{xcviii}

The lack of strong political leadership of the actual programme however, particularly since the departure of Sue Essex and Jane Davidson from the Welsh Government, has left the programme’s future development rather unguided but still relatively unrestricted due to the deliberate vagueness of the original design. The particular historical context of the programme’s formulation, its deliberate vagueness, coupled with the absence of any re-articulation of objectives or political lead, has left the specific programming in a normative void for much of its existence – arguably open to influence by global norms and practices. It is argued here that from this void, the programme officials have looked to the global norms and practices of the development industry, adopting and incorporating them over time.

In practice, WfA programme offers grants to ‘Community links’ – the grassroots development projects run largely by volunteers. The grants support the activities as well as further training and development. WfA also fund the International Development Hub (Hub) which administers the grants, organizes training, and supports the

development of 'community links'. These are discussed below, arguing that the Hub has encouraged and directed the 'links' toward international practices and norms. These practices involve the promotion and development of good governance within the partner country. Unknowingly and implicitly, the Welsh executive has become a promoter of democracy on a relatively low or localized level of society, the community level at which WfA operates; bottom up rather than at the state-wide promotion.

6.3.3 'Community Links'

Over 150 Wales–Africa community development links have been supported which represents, along with health board links to communities, the bulk of the WfA programme. WfA seeks to support the links through grant funding and training, based on the notion that Welsh practitioners – businesses or volunteer groups for example – benefit from the development link. The experiences they gain from working in Africa on the work of the partnership also satisfies the legal requirement to ensure mutual gain. The specific 'community links' strategy is vague in its aims, claiming as it does that its mission is to support charitable, learning, partnership and development links (Wales for Africa, 2013: 10) – again, broad fields incorporating a wide variety of activities.

The links are located at a local level, effectively groups of volunteers from communities in Wales who run a small, very specific project with partners in Africa. They are located within civil society or alongside region or district government and consequently rarely engage with central state governments due to their size and focus.^{xcix} Furthermore;

The devolved initiatives have encouraged interaction with African countries at a level below that of governments. Although the depth of linking initiatives varies, many solid and dedicated relationships have been built up between communities, civil society and parliamentarians in Wales, Scotland and their partner countries, resulting in a network of familiarity built on personal relationships. This is in sharp contrast to UK-wide involvement in African development, where engagement often only occurs at a governmental level (Anyimadu, 2011: 16).

With a vague strategic objective and similarly broad and accommodating strategy to meet them, no activities are strictly forbidden or discouraged; WfA could support anything so long as they fitted within the broad remit and were approved by the management.

6.3.4 Governance and democracy support

Nonetheless, the community links quickly began implementing governance related projects. Specifically, 88 organisations within the Wales for Africa scheme are contributing towards the MDG for gender equality, some of whom engage in projects that include a focus on democratic and community participation (Owen, 2010: 21). Organisations are also involved in projects which provide support to campaigning and advocacy movements (Owen, 2010: 31). Some, such as 'Positive Women', look to empower women in Swaziland aim to contribute to 'significant social change', doing so by working directly with women, as well as through advocacy programmes (Positive Women, 2016; 2016b).

Beyond the explicit democracy and human rights programmes, broader projects also engage with governance structures in the partner country. One development practitioner claims that promotion and development of new governance practices begins in order to facilitate the original development activity. The establishment of an ambulance service to take pregnant women to hospitals for the births for example, necessitates the implementation of new governance practices with the local health authority. As an experienced practitioner claims;

Some of this happens inadvertently. They strengthen local government accountability to people, but it isn't something they've set out to do, it isn't the main purpose of the project. The main purpose of the project is that women reach the hospital quicker.^c

Other groups also begin engaging in good governance promotion due to the sheer scale of their activities inevitably involving the public sector in the partner country. As the management of WfA concede;

The district governments are engaged and there are a lot of governance and accountability issues involved in that work which we take very seriously. We spend a lot of time grappling with those issues and it's difficult because people have a different understanding of accountability and transparency and governance to us, and trying to impose our levels of operating onto them is difficult, and trying to work with them to raise their standards of accountability is an ongoing challenge. I've got someone out there at the moment trying to improve their accountability structures and their management structures.^{ci}

The scale of the work that necessitates engagement with local governments is reached as a direct result of the financial assistance offered by WfA. But alongside the funding, is the capacity building and training that the WfA offers the community links via the International Development Hub, which has coordinated the training of Welsh development practitioners.

6.3.5 The International Development Hub

The WfA funded 'International Development Hub' has played a key role in facilitating this incorporation of governance schemes by funding and advising organizations and their members as they develop – further integrating the programmes with global practices and norms. It also brings the community together at national conferences, coordinating the development debate. But the key activity with regard to encouraging the implementation of governance schemes concerns the training offered by the Hub to the community links.

The content of their training is not unique or even their own, as a senior civil servant claims; 'We don't need to know what the best standards are, we just need to know who knows what the best standards are and pay them to come and run the course'.^{cii} The Hub pays for Welsh practitioners to attend training courses run by industry experts on a range of topics, including governance. Through the Hub, the Welsh international development community is being integrated with the broader, global development community.

Indeed, the WfA management see a role for themselves in developing the groups and projects in line with global norms, as one senior management official states;

The community linking project does have a model of development [for developing the links], they have this sort of pyramid approach where they're trying to move groups onwards and upwards and building the quality of the intervention and the nature of the partnership and for sure, governance issues are right in there.^{ciii}

PONT is one such organization which could be seen to characterise this growth and consequent 'drift' into promoting good governance. Originally applying for funding of a few thousand pounds, the operation has grown in size and in the funding applied for. By

today, the organization applies for Comic Relief, Big Lottery, DfID's Tropical Health Education Trust and schemes running to around half a million pounds.

The WfA and the Hub can be seen at the centre of the emergence of a far more coherent, coordinated, and informed international development policy community in Wales. A broader discourse of development has begun to penetrate the myriad of small development projects operating in Wales. One experienced practitioner remarks;

I think they're on some sort of trajectory...If you look at the evolution of organizations, I think that Christian Aid has reached a pretty sophisticated point and [are] big which makes things easier but if you look at PONT and DOLEN, they're around the middle, then you have smaller organizations which are learning from the way PONT are operating.

...

At the beginning the only thing they want to know is how to fill an application form or how do you run a participatory workshop or how do you set up a monitoring system. I think now they've gone a bit deeper than that and asked; 'well how do we transform the way these communities work?... I've noticed that more are having those discussions than there were five years ago.^{civ}

The empirical data in this case suggests that there is at play a process of 'transnational communication' of norms and practices. As discussed in chapter 2 with regard to other paradiplomatic activities (see Holzinger, Knill and Sommerer, 2008; Audet and Gendron, 2012; de la Pena Varona and Hinojal, 2012), sub-states emulate and adopt globally prevalent norms and practices. The government institutionalises those norms and practices, and propagates them within the practitioner community. Key aspects of the discourse are consequently filtering into the work of local groups, hitherto unconnected and uninterested in broad discourses of development.

For example, an integral part of this developing understanding of international development is a belief in the need for partner countries to employ solutions of their own, to develop a self-disciplined commitment to the governance reforms required. As an experienced development practitioner states;

What I've noticed within the international [development] sector in Wales is that there's a lot of, and I think this is normal in a growing sector, and it's improved since the early years of Wales for Africa, is that the focus at the

start is just on what the need is. *We* need to meet the need. Then, ‘oh actually no, we notice that it’s better when *you* try to work on it yourselves’.^{cv}

Reflecting this is WfA’s characterisation of their ‘development’ community links which identifies ‘monitoring, evaluation and learning’, ‘public accountability’ and the presence of ‘Southern leadership and coordination’ as indicators of the links’ organizational development;

Development links are characterised by strong African leadership that ensures projects are coordinated with local development priorities of appropriate authorities/agencies; evidenced by sound impact monitoring and evaluation approaches; and publicly accountable both to donors/supporters and to project beneficiaries (Wales for Africa, 2013: 12).

Here we see a further institutionalization of global norms and even the discourse of development.

It must be stressed again however that while seemingly in line with the dominant ‘development discourse’ discussed in chapter 1, the activities take place at a lower, more local level; a distinctive aspect of the Welsh programme. Some have even begun referring to the model as a distinctive, communitarian approach to international development.

It is about harnessing the power of community-based civil society links, connecting professionals such as health, teachers and environmental workers as well as members of the African diaspora, Fair traders and equality activists, to support each other on a ‘community to community’ basis – not just communities of geography, but communities of interest, knowledge and expertise. Rather than professional staff in country offices, it is volunteering and cooperation through direct contact with local in-country partners (Owen, 2014).

But the volunteers at the more local level, directly accessing communities in developing countries are brought into line with the practices and norms of the global professionals.

To summarise, the WfA programme funds activities, developed and supported by the Hub and the WfA team, which have drifted into the practice of promoting good governance through sheer size or necessity, and through the influence of the international development practitioner community. The broader understanding of development has been developed amongst the programmes in Wales with governance

making up an important part of the ideal; reflective of the global development discourse. There are both institutional and historical factors which prove key in explaining why WfA and the Welsh Government has “drifted” into implicit democracy promotion in this manner.

The executive has, by coordinating the myriad of previously unconnected development programmes throughout Wales, created an epistemic community. The Hub and WfA have led that community toward the international development community, its practices and norms with the aim of improving the quality of their intervention. However, the unique legal set-up has an equally important distorting influence upon the activities resulting in Welsh international development, and consequently the governance programmes are being aimed at a different, lower level of the public and private sector in partner states. The nature of the relationship is also, on paper at least, different in that the “development” of the partner is of benefit to the Welsh programmers.

The *intergovernmental relations*, mediating and re-defining the *constitution* and the *institutional capacity* and ability of the Welsh government to adjust its own budget, creating a new funding line for a non-devolved activity, are key opportunity structures. The agency of the Welsh government is also crucial in initiating the activity. However since the early days, political agency has not been forthcoming, and the activity remains ‘just one of those programmes that went along’.^{cvi}

6.4 The Legislature

This section will firstly argue that the Office of the Presiding Officer (OPO) should be understood as a key opportunity structure. Its establishment gave the Presiding Officer (PO) considerable freedom and adequate resources to pursue the democracy promotion activities through transnational networks. The agency of the Presiding Officer himself is then explored before the legislature’s own, explicit attempts to promote democracy abroad, documenting the specific activities. A final sub-section documents the manner in which the legislature is subcontracted by organizations within the global democracy industry .

The section will proceed to argue that the legislature has attempted to project and promote its own, distinctive model of democracy and democratic values internationally in an attempt to construct legitimacy for the broader devolution project and its associated institutions. It has also become a promoter of particular elements of democracy through its work on behalf of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD). The Office of the Presiding Officer and the legislature's involvement in transnational networks have become crucial opportunity structures for doing so, while the agency of the PO himself is a further crucial factor.

6.4.1 The Presiding Officer; the opportunity structure

As noted in the chapter's introduction, the NAFW was originally conceived of as a corporate body, collectively responsible for the institution's policy, without a distinction between the executive and opposition within the legislature. Within this model, the level of autonomy and capacity of the PO to pursue his own interests and projects was limited. Indeed the role is barely defined and the office was restricted by the need to share resources with the rest of the Assembly (see Rawlings, 2003a: 111). However, the reforms of 2001, and moves toward a *de facto* government and opposition model proved a critical juncture allowing for the PO's role to be redefined

In short, the desire to establish the separateness of the Office of the Presiding Officer (OPO) was supported by a party political consensus and dissatisfaction with the corporate body model. The reform 'was not only driven by dissatisfaction with the legal corset of the corporate body but also closely structured by it' (Rawlings, 2003a: 133-134). The legal basis for the considerable reform of the office was found in a vague but open-ended supplementary power;

Supplementary powers

The Assembly may do anything (including the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of any of its functions (HMSO, 1998: S.40)

From such basis a degree of legal and operational autonomy was added to the OPO following the PO's insistence for independent legal advice (Rawlings, 2003a: 134). This autonomy was considerably strengthened by the establishment of a "notably generous"

(Rawlings, 2003a: 135) and separate budget for the Presiding Officer and a doubling of staff complement (Rawlings, 2003b: 9). From that budget, the Education, Outreach and the International Relations Team (IRT) were established, and a clear definition of the role of the PO and his Office was made including a declaration of its maximum operational independence in carrying out its functions (Rawlings, 2003a: 134).

The IRT supports the PO and Assembly Members with their international activities. It consists of 2 team members, the Outreach and International Team managers, and works closely with the Head of the NAfW's EU Office in Brussels and the PO's office. Its activities mainly involve facilitating AM involvement with transnational networks such as the CALRE, the RegLeg or the CPA. The team also coordinates the British Isles and Mediterranean Region (BIMR) Conference which is occasionally, as in May 2014, held in Wales. Activities are also conducted on behalf of the PO, such as coordinating visits to and from the legislature and other states or sub-states. In addition to the staffing resource, the annual budget for international activity has been around £50k (NAfW Commission, 2010: 2). It is through the IRT that the PO and Legislature have engaged in democracy promotion.

This enhanced, far more independent office for the PO can be identified as an opportunity structure for any occupant who desired to exploit it for conducting international activity. Lord Dafydd Elis Thomas was such an occupant and understanding his objectives and strategies to achieve them go some way in explaining why Wales has attempted to project a particular model of democracy internationally.

6.4.2 Dafydd Elis Thomas

Elis Thomas was a former MP and a leftist leader of Plaid Cymru during the 1980s, chair of the language QUANGO 'Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg' during the 1990s, and crossbench member of the House of Lords when he took the PO's post. He held a particular understanding of the "Welsh state" and of institutions and their role in nation-building. He also held specific, political objectives during his time as PO and pursued strategies which were open to him through the opportunity structure of the PO's office.

Following a retreat from party politics during the early 1990s, he began to identify the emergence of a “Welsh government” – even if it was administrative, and not one which was directly elected by and from Wales. This was for Elis Thomas was an emergence of a proto-state via ‘the long procession through institutions [author’s translation]’ (Tu Chwith, 1996: 27);

Within and across both languages a whole system which is part administrative, part policy-making, part accountable, part bureaucratic, very quasi democratic, constitutes the government of Wales. It is easy to point to the Welsh Office, a territorial department of state, with its 3,000-odd officials mainly based in Cardiff, and its £4 billion budget, with its 1,500 appointed places on nominated bodies (Elis Thomas, 1991: 60).

His ideas on political strategy began to revolve around this conception and drift away from his notions of ‘community socialism’ which dominated his presidency of the nationalist party (Wyn Jones, 1996; see also Wyn Jones, 2007: 186-226). By the time his successor as leader, Dafydd Wigley came to him seeking advice on the party’s ‘game plan’ (Wigley, 1993: 309), Elis Thomas had moved towards espousing what Wyn Jones claims was a Trotskyist strategy of entryism (2007: 242-243). Elis-Thomas called for an infiltration by nationalists of ‘QUANGO Wales’ – the institutions of this emerging Welsh government – to be followed by a move to democratise them.

The strategy suits a mind that places great value on the power of discourse in building the nation and the role institutions can play in constructing and articulating that discourse;

For a representative democracy is only a relatively small, and largely theatrical part of government. And politics as sites of the language of power, is almost everywhere. So by not being realised, by being rejected, but by being a reference point for continuing the argument, the idea of not having an elected assembly or parliament actually leads to having more powers...Continually talking the national ‘language’ actually continues to make Wales, event by event, more ‘national’ (Elis Thomas, 1991: 60).

Elis Thomas had already noted empirical examples of the constructors and articulators of such a ‘national’-building discourse, notably in the form of Wales-wide institutions and through their communication with the people of Wales;

Weekday Wales, Wales This Week, Wales on Sunday, are all mediated talking of and remaking of Wales. The Welsh Development Agency together with the Welsh Office press office and the Western Mail newspaper have been regular generators of 'good news about the principality'. This is nation building, the role so often described by mass communication studies of emerging states in the so-called Third World (Elis Thomas, 1991: 61).

It is no great surprise therefore that such an individual as Elis Thomas would appreciate the opportunities, particularly the operational independence, presented by the (re-)structuring of the Presiding Officer to pursue political strategies of nation-building through its discursive, rhetorical and symbolic activities.

Dafydd Elis Thomas remains open about his political objective as Presiding Officer; it was to construct legitimacy.^{cvii} The pursuit of this objective was noted as early as Richard Rawlings' 2001 O'Donnell Lecture;

More recent developments confirm the rise of the Presiding Office. It has for example, become ever more heavily engaged in the ongoing struggle of the Assembly to win the hearts and minds of the Welsh people...However attenuated in legal powers, the Assembly should not knowingly be undersold! (Rawlings, 2003b: 10).

The battle to construct legitimacy was twofold. Legitimacy firstly of the institution's existence, that its standing should be strengthened; 'in the sense that we prove that we are in the international community and that we're the "new kid on the block"'.^{cviii} The paper-thin majority in favour of devolution in '97 only encouraged this objective; 'Obviously the majority of six thousand or whatever wasn't legitimating enough and I think you have to build on that all the time'.^{cix}

But secondly, the legitimacy of the values and very justification for devolution – the values of 'inclusive' democracy. These themes and values are exemplified in the solipsistic international and domestic promotion of the very same democratic values which made up the inclusivity doctrine; the very basis and legitimizing discourse of Welsh devolution.

Practicing, and importantly talking of the practice of multilingual governance for example, became an essential part of this 'pitch' and manifested in Elis Thomas' insistence for Welsh only names for parts of the legislature's building – 'Senedd', 'Oriel',

‘Cwrt’, ‘Siambr’ or ‘Neuadd’ – or his tendency to open plenary in Welsh.^{cx} In this sense, the institution was being used to manifest Wales’ inclusive values. By showing and saying ‘we do this kind of democracy’, the legislature was symbolically and literally telling people that ‘this kind of democracy’ was being done by Wales. Elis Thomas was constructing and legitimizing Welsh democracy as a concept as well as an institution.

This objective of legitimizing the institution and its values was mainly pursued domestically through the Presiding Office’s outreach and education teams travelling the country to publicise the work of the Assembly and encouraging participation in its activities; ‘The most important thing I could do was spend all the time I had going around Wales appertaining to the people’^{cx}. In this regard, ap Gareth has noted his employment of ‘what Kertzer calls “borrowed legitimacy”’ (ap Gareth, 2010: 46); formal openings of the legislature by the Queen with international dignitaries invited to bestow an older form of very symbolic legitimacy upon the institution. But the strategy of constructing legitimacy was also pursued through international activity and by promoting “Welsh” democracy. As will be noted in the next section, the IRT’s strategic objectives remain to this day, firmly in-line with Elis Thomas’ aim of projecting a legitimizing discourse at any opportunity, highlighted by the legislature’s willingness to engage with networks and partake in international showcases and events to advertise and promote “Welsh democracy”.

Elis Thomas was not simply an occupant of a position within the institution, he was, through his office, a key actor within the institutional structures. His objectives were influenced by the institution itself and its lack of legitimacy. He took the newly (re-)constructed PO’s office with the clear objective of building and establishing the legitimacy of the institution and its values. This was done through an explicit promotion, if not advertising of Welsh democracy. He held a personal understanding of the importance of institutions and their ability to construct and project discursive power. Over his tenure as PO, he also enjoyed a complete lack of opposition to his activities in practice or principle. The legislature consequently pursued a clearly defined interest, making use of the opportunities presented to engage with any and all partners and to be “dragged” into activity on behalf of global actors and networks.

The following sections will detail the explicit promotion of democracy, as well as the manner in which the legislature is also subcontracted by other organizations.

6.4.3 The NAfW's democracy promotion

The democracy promotion activities in question developed in an *ad hoc* fashion until the Assembly Commission developed an international strategy,^{cxii} approved and adopted explicitly by the legislature in 2010. Until the strategic objectives and a corresponding action plan was developed, activities followed the instruction of the then PO, Dafydd Elis Thomas. He had defined his own international remit quite broadly in the early days following the *de facto* constitutional reforms after the demise of Alun Michael. The PO effectively established that; 'I could decide my own priorities as Llywydd [Presiding Officer]...' ^{cxiii}

By 2010, with the Assembly Commission in place, there was a perceived need to formalize activity; to increase financial scrutiny and accountability.^{cxiv} There was also a sense that there needed to be a 'change of culture' toward a more coherent and strategic approach which could be evaluated.^{cxv} By 2010 therefore, a strategy coordinated the international activities was produced and clearly reflected the objectives;

5.0 Strategic Objectives

...to promote and present a positive image of Wales and Welsh democracy on an international stage by participating in relevant international bodies and establishing formalised partnerships with key internationally focused organisations;

to provide the Assembly with the opportunity to gain and impart knowledge and understanding of international good practice, using this to improve the Assembly's practice where appropriate; and

to promote Wales and Welsh democracy by focusing on specified themes to be reviewed annually and linked to the Assembly's positioning statement. For 2011–15 we propose to focus on the following themes:

citizen participation;

e-democracy;

effective scrutiny of Government; and

sustainable and transparent democracy.

Or more explicitly on the NAfW's website;

One of the Assembly's strategic objectives is to promote Wales and Welsh Democracy to the wider world. Through participation in international parliamentary networks and engagement in bespoke programmes and activities, the Assembly aims to promote and exchange best parliamentary practice internationally; and ensure that the Assembly is positioned appropriately as a distinct, innovative and progressive international legislature on the world stage (NAfW, 2014b).

Each of the strategic objectives aim to explicitly promote either the values or specific techniques of "Welsh democracy", or to develop and share good practice in democratic governance. The values and techniques can be seen to reflect many of the unique aspects institutionalized in the GoW Act in the name of inclusivity, detailed in a previous section of this chapter. This strategic objective of promoting Welsh democracy has been recognized and incorporated into the legislature's approach in general. The Assembly explicitly opens itself to any potential international partners;

The Assembly Commission has a stated ambition to make the most of opportunities in the UK and abroad to promote Wales and the work of the Assembly and to play a part in the development of parliamentary democracy elsewhere in the world (NAfW Annual Report 2011-2012: 22)

Why the legislature has adopted these specific objectives is less clear from its own literature and declarations on the matter. The strategy claims that strategic coherence is important but does not outline the reasoning behind the choice of objectives;

Failing to deliver a unified, coherent international strategy could have a significant impact on the reputation of the Assembly, its relationship with the Welsh electorate and its international standing (NAfW Commission, 2010: 4).

Civil servants who worked on the strategy suggest however, that the objectives simply reflect the fact that since the establishment of the Assembly, the PO had consistently pushed the promotion of various democratic themes or techniques; the strategy sought to formalize and coordinate the activities.^{cxvi} In effect, here was an instance of path dependency – the PO had long since set the "rules" and defined what the legislature did, the strategy only formalized and reflected this.

The democratic themes which the legislature has consistently promoted can be categorized as; participation of women in public life; youth engagement; bilingualism and multilingual governance; accessibility, inclusiveness and transparency of the policy process – notably with regard to parliamentary committees; and the technology and architecture of the parliament. These are reflective of the values of ‘inclusiveness’; the themes that legitimize the institution itself.

Promoting the role and participation of women in public life and youth engagement is associated closely with the legislature’s second PO (2011-2015), Rosemary Butler (also a former DPO) who took advantage of her influence as President of the CPA and role as PO to advance the issue further. The theme was, on her instruction, given a prominent role in the 44th BIMR Conference for example (NAfW CPA, 2014).^{cxvii} The Assembly’s Outreach Team actively engages with young people meanwhile with the aim of involving them in political debate (NAfW Annual Report 2011-2012: 21-22). Another central theme to the BIMR conference, youth engagement activities such as the “vote 2011” campaign targeting 18-25 year olds is held as exemplary practice to international visitors (NAfW CPA, 2014: 9).

Bilingualism is a field in which the Assembly claims to be a world leader with an ‘internationally recognised status as a democratically elected body committed to delivering innovative bilingual services’ (NAfW, 2013: 5). Simultaneous translation in Plenary and Committee meetings; translation of the record of proceedings; a dedicated in-house translation team available for AM use and support for staff; technologies developed in partnership with Microsoft in developing translation software (NAfW, 2013) and the passing of an Official Languages Bill in 2012 are some defining features of the institution’s bilingual character – central to the ‘inclusivity’ doctrine and to the Presiding Officer personally.^{cxviii} Canada, Israel and other countries and regions have approached the legislature for support in developing or reforming their own bilingual or multilingual services.^{cxix} The theme is another which is central to the BIMR Conference (NAfW CPA, 2014).

Trinidad and Tobago’s relationship with the Assembly illustrates the manner in which the legislature’s expertise in transparent and accessible committees is promoted as well

as specifically sought. The Caribbean islands initiated the relationship following an unproductive engagement with the Westminster Parliament. The latter institution was considered too large (Trinidad and Tobago elects just 41 MPs) and such a sprawling Westminster style committee structure seen as unsuitable as a model for the small islands' legislature. Wales was considered a better fit and the Assembly's Business Manager and the Chief Committee Clerk undertook a training visit upon the request of (and cost met by) the Trinidad and Tobago legislature. The reasoning given by Trinidad and Tobago, as well as being a more suitable 'fit', was that it was seen as very transparent due to its practice of consulting a broad range of witnesses during committee inquiries.^{cxx}

Finally, the architecture and IT infrastructure of the Assembly have been themes of great interest to delegations visiting the Assembly. The legislature has been established and its workings and proceedings developed with IT in mind – a natural advantage over older legislatures. The architecture meanwhile was designed with specific concepts of transparency, sustainability and ergonomics in mind.^{cxxi}

The legislature has sought to promote the themes in many ways; through bilateral engagement with other legislatures; exchange visits and showcases targeting foreign staff and elected officials; and a programme of welcoming "higher level" dignitaries such as High Commissioners, delegations of elected members and Ambassadors (NAfW Annual Report 2011-2012: 22). Promotional work is also carried out through other channels such as the transnational networks of which the legislature is a member, such as the British Irish Parliamentary Assembly and the CPA annual conferences (NAfW Annual Report 2011-2012: 22). Exhibitions and seminars have also been hosted during international events such as the Canadian Parliamentary Seminar (NAfW, 2011). The Assembly itself hosts international events, showcasing "Welsh democracy" and the NAfW itself hosted and developed the 44th British Isles and Mediterranean Region (BIMR) Conference in 2014. The Conference theme was 'Equality of Access to Democracy' with a specific focus on women in public life, youth engagement and bilingualism (NAfW, 2014a).

The targets or recipients vary from advanced Western democratic countries such as Australia, Canada or Denmark; “young” democracies such as the Czech Republic, Russia or Brazil; developing countries such as Lesotho; regions such as Flanders; and institutions such as the British Council (NAfW Annual Report 2011-2012: 22).^{cxxii} Some targets are strategic, such as the regular invitations to delegations from the countries scheduled to take the presidency of the EU while others initiate the relationship themselves as seen in the case of Canada, or Israel who have for example sought assistance in specific fields such as bilingual and committee services.^{cxxiii}

Thematically, the democracy promotion remains close to the politics of inclusivity. While the legislature acts using its own resources and contacts, it is also presented with the opportunity to do so by global partners and networks; opportunities which it takes. One such opportunity is through the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) which is explored in detail in the following section.

6.4.4 CPA

The CPA is a prominent example of the legislature’s democracy promotion. The CPA Wales branch’s establishment in 1999 (NAfW, 2016b), was desired by some elected members^{cxxiv} and never opposed^{cxxv} nor was it a controversial decision.^{cxxvi} Wales’ links with Lesotho provided the basis for a long-term partnership for the branch and series of activities which primarily involved support for the parliamentary structures between 2005-2011.

Work and study programmes formed the core of the link’s activities ‘with the purpose of delivering a training seminar to staff and Members of Committees at the Lesotho Parliament’ (NAfW CPA, 2011: 5), making use of staff and AMs’ expertise and a total budget of £36,587.25. Personal links with the UNDP and Dolen Cymru were used to facilitate the visits, design the content of the training programmes and make contacts (NAfW CPA, 2011).

Several visits were conducted including a ‘Post Election Seminar’ involving sessions on ‘Parliamentary Democracy’ and ‘Ethics and Accountability of Members of Parliament’ (NAfW CPA, 2011: 4-5). However;

Little is known about the outcome of this seminar due to the fact that no post visit report is known to exist and the Member involved did not respond to requests for information in relation to the visit (NAfW CPA, 2011: 25).

Such problems regarding lack of evaluation and reporting appear to be a consistent theme with the democracy assistance activities of the CPA proving an important factor in the demise of the link.^{cxxvii} In November 2008 for example, the Vice President of the Lesotho Senate visited the Assembly for a study visit, “primarily for the purpose of observing the roles of Presiding Officer and Deputy Presiding Officer” (NAfW CPA, 2011: 6). However, not only is there no formal post visit report known to exist but;

There are no records or reports to indicate what the benefits of the visit were, or how the visit may have led to the improvement of parliamentary practice in Lesotho. There is no record of the Vice President spending any time with the Presiding Officer or the Deputy Presiding Officer, which appeared to have been a key, if not the central, purpose of his visit (NAfW CPA, 2011: 27).

The retrospective legacy report remains a rare record of the link and concludes by emphasizing the difficulty of evaluating the programmes.

For individual politicians in the domestic setting however, it is claimed that the link has proved a success. For Mike German for example;

We have had the deputy leader of Lesotho’s upper House here working with us, we have trained committee clerks and chairs of committees, and we are giving assistance to the legislative framework in Lesotho by helping their legal workers (NAfW, 2009).

Overall, the legislature has proved a consistent promoter of democratic themes and techniques since its inception. The legislature itself seeks to promote and showcase “Welsh democracy” bilaterally with foreign delegations but also through transnational networks when given the opportunity with domestic structures and personal links exploited. It is directed to do so by its PO and later its strategy and occasionally on the behest of others, and the activities themselves are coordinated by the legislature’s IRT.

Over the years it has also become an institution regarded as a leader in some fields and its expertise sought by legislatures around the world, either due to the Assembly’s expertise or its suitability as a smaller and/or newer legislature.

6.4.5 Westminster Foundation for Democracy

As noted, the legislature opens itself to global partners, sharing its good democratic practice and is willing to engage with other states and sub-states, but also with democracy promotion organizations. From the legislature's perspective, it is willingly and knowingly allowing itself to be subcontracted and incorporated into the broader democracy assistance community. Furthermore, and perhaps importantly for the broader understanding of sub-state democracy promotion, we may note that the agency of other actors is also a key factor. In this case, the agency of national level democracy organizations is key in understanding how a sub-state is incorporated into the democracy industry.

The Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) was established in 1992 by the UK government as an independent public body for supporting democracy abroad. Its main sponsor has been the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) with the occasional extra funding from other partners for specific projects. It is the UK government's democracy assistance tool with very close ties to the Westminster government, exemplified in its self-declared aim of contributing to UK foreign policy goals (WFD, 2011: 5). The FCO also appoints its board of governors who remain responsible for overseeing the programming and choice of partners. Following cuts in funding from 2010 onward, the Department for International Development (DfID) began co-funding their activities.

Reflected in its expenditure is its focus is upon three key elements in society which are considered essential to a functioning multi-party democracy; the legislature; civil society; and Political Parties (WFD, 2013a: 8). With regard to its programming, its focus is heavily upon improving 'engagement in political processes in weak, emerging or developing' (WFD, 2013a: 3).

A key strand of the foundation's work is the parliamentary work programme and the party development programme. The establishment of the National Assembly for Wales in 1998 has enabled the legislature to engage with the Foundation's parliamentary work.

The Foundation's parliamentary work programme and its use of the Welsh legislature in its work illustrates the manner in which the broader democracy assistance industry has subcontracted a Welsh actor into the broader democracy industry. The parliamentary work programme accounts for around £2m of the WFD's annual expenditure (WFD, 2013a: 8) and; '...works to strengthen parliamentary capacity at national and sub-national level. It does this through training, sharing expertise on a peer-to-peer basis and building institutional capacity' (WFD, 2014).

The Welsh legislature is utilized for several purposes, being acknowledged by the Foundation's Corporate Plan as a source of 'specialist and professional expertise' (WFD, 2011: 8). The legislature sees value in the experience and knowledge picked up by staff through the democracy work^{cxxviii} while WFD officers attribute value to the expertise sourced from the NafW;

...we tend to tap into their expertise. It's quite a technical thing, setting up a new parliament; we've found that experience from Wales and Scotland extremely useful and a lot more relevant to a lot of the countries that we work in than perhaps the experience here in Westminster.^{cxxix}

Drilling below the corporate plan's rhetoric on privileged partnerships and specialist expertise, we may note several specific fields in which the expertise of the NafW (and the Scottish Parliament) is sought. They are; institutional transparency and openness; general similarities to other new or emerging democracies; and the committee structures and pre-legislative scrutiny.

The notion that transparency is an issue where the devolved legislature excels is not only held within the NafW itself,^{cxxx} but also within the WFD, who regard these additions to their 'toolkit' as 'hugely enriching'.^{cxxxi} As one WFD official claims;

We can just sense these things when you walk into the buildings, they are open, they are transparent...that transparency is a huge issue and it's where broadly the Scottish and Welsh have got it right.^{cxxxii}

It is manifested more specifically in the Parliament's workings; the frequency and detail of its publications and also in the openness of its committee and consultation processes. The values and associated techniques are, as noted above, the very same that the legislature has sought to promote itself.

However, an further pool of expertise has developed and been tapped into by the WFD – one not promoted by the legislature itself – in the institution’s experience of an unicameral parliament; an experience which does not exist in Westminster. WFD officers see the experience as more similar to the parliaments currently being developed in partner countries.^{cxxxiii} Furthermore, NafW committee structures are also considered to be a lot stronger than at Westminster, in terms of their openness, accessibility to civil society and pre-legislative scrutiny in particular.^{cxxxiv}

Despite the attempts to promote the NafW as a bastion of bilingual good practice, belief in any Welsh expertise in the field is not shared or even seen as important by the WFD’s parliamentary support programme. No reference is made to linguistic issues in strategy documents and enabling linguistic diversity is not considered a high priority for democratic institutional development. Not only do WFD officers not see the issue as particularly important; ‘It’s not something we bring up as a matter of course’,^{cxxxv} but such institutionalization of linguistic diversity is not considered an unique ‘Welsh’ characteristic;

...it’s something where the Scottish parliament [equally] has the facility for but don’t actually use, so I don’t think that’s something that’s uniquely Welsh, that you can take a unique experience form the Welsh Assembly and export.^{cxxxvi}

Specifically, the work is conducted either through funding visits by NafW staff to the partner country or by financing inward study visits. Committee clerks such as Paul Silk with extensive experience of both the Assembly and Westminster are in particular demand for their expertise.

Though not a central element of the WFD’s parliamentary work strand, the NafW nevertheless has offered to ‘enrich its package’. This is particularly welcome by WFD officers following a period of change. The decision by the FCO to co-fund the Foundation and the consequent requirements they placed upon the programming to bring the work foundation in-line with the rest of the industry has demanded a more relevant and ‘competitive’ package of programmes.

... [it] makes it a lot more difficult around your programme design, your monitoring and evaluation, how you demonstrate and document your

impact, things like that... we have to get better, that we have to come on to the 'level' – again not terminology I like – of our competitors; be they NDI, be they the Dutch, be they the Scandinavians, the Germans, or whoever. If we can't compete to their level, why would people want our support?^{cxxxvii}

The relevance of devolved administrations in partner countries such as Montenegro is proving increasingly useful in this context in that it enriches the WFD's 'product'. Another WFD partner, Kenya for example (WFD, 2013a: 10), completed a large-scale constitutional reform process in 2010 which devolved power to 47 counties. The UK's devolved experience consequently became acutely relevant and attractive both for that particular partner and to the WFD's "sales pitch";

...if you like it or not the WFD exists to promote a Westminster type model and devolution is an undeniable feature of the Westminster model. This is how we do government and we talk now about devolving power further... we can draw on our experience in the UK of setting up the devolved arrangements where we couldn't do before; devolution didn't exist, we had very little to share with these places. I think it's a huge opportunity^{cxxxviii}.

The NafW has offered knowledge and expertise which enhances the "package" which the WFD can now offer in an increasingly market-like democracy assistance community. What the Assembly brings in particular seem to strengthen and support the legitimacy of governance structures by offering good practice in transparency, accountability and accessibility with regard to the legislature. Its size and 'newness' further strengthen that contribution to the "package" and increase its relevance to potential partners.

The legislature's openness and willingness to engage with any opportunities to promote its democracy makes it a willing partner for any democracy promoters who wish to tap into their expertise. There is a growing demand of late for the specific 'product' that the legislature can offer –this "product" seems to cover the very grounds that the legislature is itself attempting to occupy. Techniques and practices that aim to realize the values of inclusiveness and strengthen the legitimacy of governance structures; openness, transparency and ease of engagement – arguably a success therefore of the legislature's own strategies to promote such elements.

Indeed, there is growing evidence supporting the notion that subcontracted Welsh democracy promotion is focused upon core principles. Another democracy organization

making use of the Assembly's staff and expertise for example, is the Global Partners Governance foundation, 'a social purpose company working to strengthen political institutions and improve the quality of political representation in countries around the world' (Global Partners Governance, 2016). Using former Assembly officials, they espouse the benefits of devolving and decentralizing governance, claiming that such governance can be based on principles of accountability, clarity, and simplicity for citizens (Silk, 2015: 2), notions close to the inclusive model promoted by the legislature itself.

However further values such as bilingualism are not recognized as either particularly Welsh or necessary for democracy promoters. But the "product" is further strengthened by the specific characteristics of Wales; its unicameral nature and specific, small size. This "product" and the expertise does not exist outside the sub-state UK level and the value of sub-states is certainly recognized by WFD staff, and increasingly the WFD's strategic approach with both reference to the Assembly's contribution in its corporate plan, and Welsh recognition on its board of governors. No doubt the partnership with DfID and the emphasis on competitiveness in the democracy market has pressured the WFD to enrich its own 'product'. The international democracy industry has begun to subcontract the product they want from Wales, which in turn has shown enthusiasm toward being involved. The legislature's methods however don't divert from the WFD's approach – its unique 'product' is incorporated into the larger "package" being sold.

6.4.6 Concluding remarks

The legislature has sought to promote and construct the legitimacy of the Assembly and the concept behind that institution. Consequently, and mirrored by the concurrent domestic 'advertising' of Welsh democracy, little if any strategic thought was given to potential targets, for the real 'audience' was as much the Welsh people. The specific elements of democracy promoted are however conceptually aligned with a more 'inclusive' model of democracy – deliberately so. Participation, openness and transparency are indeed the themes which encapsulate the aims of the activities being promoted as 'good practice'. These are also the elements which are sought by global partners such as the Canadians, Czechs, Trinidadians and Kenyans. While the PO's

objective may have been solipsistic, there seems a broader demand for what it is 'selling'.

Key to this understanding is the recognition of the constitutionally empowered and empowered OPO as an opportunity structure, and the agency of the PO himself, who established and institutionalised the rules that would remain long after his departure.

6.5 Conclusions

6.5.1 Opportunity structures of Welsh democracy promotion

In the Welsh case, the constitutional and semi-legal rules of international relations under devolution, backed by the disciplining IGR and self-disciplined adherence, keeps the government from expanding its activities beyond a continuation of pre-devolutionary economic and co-operational paradiplomacy. Much like Maryland, political paradiplomacy is prevented, and the government has no opportunity to engage in such. With regard to international development however, the flexibility of the IGR has proved a means of creating some opportunities. At times the resources of the Welsh government have been allocated to promoting international development while at other times, the government is refrained from doing so. In this sense, the IGR is a key opportunity structure that can both constrain and enable international activity in the Welsh case, giving specific meaning to the constitutional and semi-legal rules, depending on context, and allow or restrict political paradiplomacy.

The (re-)construction of the OPO meanwhile was a critical constitutional juncture and, in being part of the constitutional set-up for the legislature, a key opportunity structure. The legal license deriving from the reformed OPO and its resources to engage in international activities has allowed the Presiding Officer, a key agent, to develop the legislature into an enthusiastic promoter and advertiser of "Welsh democracy". While supra-national political and/or economic institutions or international organizations failed to structure opportunities for the Welsh government, the Legislature was able to promote its democratic model within international fora.

The domestic political context, specifically the need to construct legitimacy for devolution in the legislature's case, and the Labour government's desire to project an outward-looking Wales, has structured opportunities and motivations for political forces to look to the promotion of democracy or international development as a means of fulfilling those objectives. The initiation of the activities reflects the time period where such motivations were strong, and the diminishing importance of those motivations also mirror a lack of interest in further developing or reforming the democracy promotion or international development activities.

The partner states or sub-states with which both the government and legislature have engaged with meanwhile are themselves key opportunity structures, allowing for the establishment of partnerships. Access to the networks have also allowed, though in a conditioned manner, the promotion of democracy. Development norms and practices are crucial in understanding the nature of Welsh development assistance and how Wales has come to promote democracy more implicitly. It has sought to emulate, incorporate, and institutionalise those norms and practices within its own activities.

Like Maryland however, British foreign policy and Wales' representation within state foreign policy was of key importance in structuring opportunities for individuals within the legislature to promote democracy on behalf of other actors. The WFD and more recently, private companies have subcontracted Welsh officials, and Wales, though at times a democracy promotion actor, both explicitly and more implicitly through its development programme, is also a source of subcontracted knowledge for broader actors.

Like Flanders and Maryland, the timing of the development of particular activities is a key context. The positive connotations of engaging in international development following the Gleneagles G8 and 'Make Poverty History' campaigns lends further support to the notion that the activity was, at least in part, a means of satisfying domestic objectives and projecting a particular 'outward looking Wales'.

Ultimately the opportunity structures, specifically the constitution and its mediation by the IGR work so as to construct opportunities and motivations for the executive to engage in international development, but restricting more political or explicit

democracy promotion. They meanwhile motivate and create opportunities for the legislature to promote democracy more explicitly. The role of other actors and broader UK policy also structures situations where the subcontracting of depoliticized knowledge is an option for those actors. Wales can be viewed a democracy promoter and an opportunity structure for other democracy promoters.

6.5.2 Agency

Several actors and their agency emerge as important factors with regard to Welsh democracy promotion. Firstly, the agency of the government, pursuing and exploiting opportunities to engage, for domestic political reasons, in international activities. Though shaped and constrained by the strict constitutional and IGR context, the agency of the government was able to pursue its objective and capitalise on the opportunity to engage in international development.

The PO's personal agency is a key factor in shaping the role and activities of the legislature, in turn, establishing the rules and path for future occupants of the role. The institution itself, or rather the perceived lack of legitimacy generated by a thin majority in favour of devolution, was a key motivation for the PO to engage in the campaign to strengthen the legitimacy of the institution and associated concept of 'inclusiveness'. Not only were the methods shaped by the institutional context, but the motivation to engage in some activities also.

Finally, the agency of other actors, in this case a national level democracy organization, has also proved a key factor in subcontracting an albeit willing NAFW into the broader democracy industry. Welsh democracy promotion is not the result of regional agency or Welsh political forces alone. Other actors see the Welsh product as an useful contribution to their own packages, and the legislature acts as an opportunity structure for those agents.

6.5.3 Understanding the democracy promotion of Wales

The findings from the Welsh case offered a complex picture with regard to which branches of the sub-state have been able to engage in various types of activities. The executive, through the IGR that accompany the constitutional set-up, has been

disciplined and is self-disciplined with regard to engagement in political activities. Its only political engagement abroad is its international development programme, carefully designed so as to not break the strict, if only semi-legal, rules of Welsh international activities.

Nonetheless, the international development activities are implicitly concerned with changing governance structures and practices in the partner country, albeit at a more local level where the Welsh groups tend to engage. Implicitly therefore, the Welsh government funds and coordinates governance reform and the promotion of democracy abroad. Lacking expertise and resources to develop the programme however, the executive has uncritically turned to the “industry” and established actors in the field of international development for a lead in developing the manner in which its own programmes are run. The donor client relationship in the Welsh case involves the donor directing the client toward the global industry.

With regard to motivation, this is not a projection of influence or power, nor solely or even principally a means of achieving a foreign policy objective. It is argued that the programme aims to meet domestic political objectives by projecting a particular conception of international actorness under the Labour government; an outward-looking, globally minded Wales.

Meanwhile, the legislature, following what has been identified as a critical constitutional juncture, has emerged as an independent and adequately resourced institution capable of engaging in a particular form of explicit democracy promotion. ‘Welsh democracy’ itself is reflective of the values of inclusivity and its promotion involves the transfer of knowledge, expertise, and experience of enhancing democratic accountability, transparency, access, and openness.

The domestic agency of the first PO himself, Dafydd Elis-Thomas, at a crucial and formative period of the institution’s existence, is considered a key factor in the development of the legislature’s ‘advertising’ of Welsh democracy. This reflects the notion that ‘...individual predilections being especially important in the small infant body’ (Rawlings, 2003b: 2), and is in keeping with the theoretical space that historical institutionalism gives to agency.

The PO's early definition of the Assembly's role internationally set the path which has continued into the period after Elis Thomas left his post, and even into a period where legitimacy is a less pressing issue for the institution. Given the lack of evaluation or follow-up to these programmes, one may even question whether the development of democracy within partners is of any real importance. This 'promotion' was about the promoter, not the product or the partner to whom it is promoted. Because its audience was not necessarily its foreign partners, but rather the Welsh people. Again, a means of projecting and constructing a conception of Wales' international actorness, and by extension, constructing legitimacy for the devolution project.

The sub-state experience of democratic governance is also something that industry actors are beginning to tap into and in this sense, we cannot ignore the importance of agency from other levels within the Lecourian framework. The WFD in particular has sought to capitalise on the legislature and its political parties' experiences in a small, new, unicameral institution. There is also a desire to exploit and use the Welsh experience of attempting to develop a more inclusive and deliberative democracy. In an attempt to broaden and enrich the "package" on offer to foreign partners in an increasingly market-like environment, other actors have sought to drag a willing sub-state into the business of promoting democracy abroad.

While the legislature is willing to work with the industry (as doing so "fits" within the broader strategy), it is passive with regard to engagement with the medium or content of the sessions. It is subcontracted to deliver a particular knowledge, understanding and experience of democratic governance. In this sense, the legislature is also an opportunity structure for other actors. The act of subcontracting them can be seen as an attempt by the national level actor to innovate and develop the package; a possible jumping off point for further research, rather than a focus of this project.

The opportunity structures have proved useful in guiding the exploration of the case, as well as assisting in the identification of key variables in the Welsh case. The constitutional set-up and the accompanying intergovernmental relations are key in restricting the Welsh government's political engagement abroad. There is however a degree of self-discipline on behalf of the Welsh actors, conscious of the disruptive

consequences of breaking semi-legal conventions and rules. The intergovernmental relations have also been key in facilitating the exploitation of loopholes in the devolution settlement when a political consensus exists regarding Welsh involvement in political activities. The (re-)construction of the PO's office however, must be seen as a key opportunity structure for promoting or advertising "Welsh democracy".

To understand Wales as a democracy promotion actor, we may draw upon categories identified in Chapters 1-3. There is a national interest that motivates political forces to capitalize upon the opportunities that are created by the structural context. However, the 'national interest' of the Welsh executive is to construct a particular conception of Welsh international activity that will complement the image promoted at the domestic level.

But a strict, self-disciplined adherence to the "rules" of international activity suggests that the executive does not wish to embroil itself with the muddy waters of international politics. Interestingly, the executive does not hold a monopoly over paradiplomacy and consequently another, though not contradictory, 'national interest' has been pursued by the legislature through the PO. The attempt to construct legitimacy in the eyes of the domestic audience included an international projection of 'Welsh democracy'.

In both instances however, democracy promotion and international development have proved a means by which political actors have attempted to project and manifest particular values within international activities. Both also have been attempts to construct a particular notion of Welsh actorness in the minds of a domestic audience. Furthermore, both were initiated at an early stage in the institution's existence – WfA during the second Assembly (2003-2007), and the legislature very soon after its empowerment. With time however, political interest in both activities has diminished and while WfA looked to the global development industry for a lead since, the concept of path dependency helps understand the legislature's persistence with the same activities.

Chapter 7: An understanding of sub-state democracy promotion

This project has been anchored by three research questions. The first two were addressed in chapters 1-3, by identifying the current problems of understanding sub-state democracy promotion, and developing a means by which it could be better understood. The third research question asks ‘In what ways will this new understanding contribute to the knowledge of sub-states and democracy promotion?’ Using the approach which formed the answer to the second question, and empirical data from the case studies, a better understanding of sub-state democracy promotion can be constructed. With this understanding, the third research question can be addressed as a conclusion to the project. Drawing on the data from the three cases and the theoretical approach, this chapter will attempt to better understand sub-state democracy promotion.

Before proposing the understanding however, it must be noted that it is based upon the core historical institutionalist assumption that the engagement of sub-states in the promotion of democracy is dependent upon structural opportunities and the agency of actors within that structural context at particular times. Rules will be constructed at critical periods in history and, barring junctures or periods of dynamism within the institutional context, actors will be dependent upon those paths that have been set. Institutions set the structural context and condition – not dictate – the agency of actors. Yet neither structure nor agency are independent of each other, rather, they share a symbiotic relationship. The institutions in question are those identified by the Lecourian framework, and examined in this project with regard to their role in the various cases.

Such theoretical underpinnings will inevitably influence the understanding of sub-state democracy promotion presented here. However, as argued in chapter 3, in the absence of international relations theory, and without an equally extensive project to reform and adjust those theories to account for sub-state international activities, the modified Lecourian and historical institutionalist approach offers the most advanced theoretical approach for better understanding sub-state democracy promotion.

The historical institutionalist approach is also justified in hindsight, as in all three cases, both structure and agency changed with time – taking an historical approach enriched the understanding of those cases and drew out the ‘when’ of democracy promotion in particular. Both the institutional structure and domestic agency were products of their own past, as well as constructors of their future form. In understanding sub-state democracy promotion therefore, the historical context was key to understanding structure and agency.

This chapter will proceed by understanding sub-state democracy promotion based upon comparative conclusions from the case studies, and interpreted using the Lecourian framework. Specifically, it will seek to understand the what, why, and when of sub-state democracy promotion. The key opportunity structures will be identified, and agency discussed and the understanding will be formed through the historical institutionalist perspective. Following this initial, Lecourian understanding, a broader investigation of sub-state democracy promotion themes will seek to enrich the understanding.

The key finding is that there are three possible means by which sub-state democracy promotion can be understood. Opportunity structures operate in three distinct ways, and sub-state democracy promotion is therefore better understood in this manner. Different opportunity structures are at play, the relationship with agency is different, and consequently the how, when and why is different. It is argued here that a broad, general explanation of sub-state democracy promotion does not adequately capture the data, and a more nuanced distinction between the various types is required. The three types are termed explicit, implicit, and subcontracted democracy promotion. The three types of sub-state democracy promotion will be considered separately in the following discussion.

7.1 Explicit democracy promotion

When sub-states initiate their own activities with the specific aim of promoting democracy abroad, we may refer to these activities as explicit democracy promotion. In short, promoting democracy is at least one of the stated aims, as well as a demonstrable aspect of the activity. Flanders’ CEEP, its bilateral partnership with Chile, or the Welsh

legislature's activities would be examples of explicit sub-state democracy promotion. In engaging in explicit democracy promotion, sub-states are democracy promotion actors.

The framework drew attention to some key opportunity structures that facilitate this activity. Specifically, these are the *capacity of the sub-state* and the *constitutional division of competence*. The *IGR* however can constrain sub-states from engaging in such activities. The *global security context* meanwhile was also important in facilitating engagement abroad in the promotion of democracy, while the *domestic political context* structures opportunities and motivations, and is discussed in the consequent sub-section.

The *capacity of the sub-state* to engage in paradiplomacy was a key factor in all instances. For the Flemish government and Welsh legislature, the capacity adjust and allocate budgets and resources according to policy priorities created opportunities for investing those resources into democracy promoting activities. These were key aspects which enabled the activity to be pursued by political forces in government or presiding office.

Closely linked to the previous point is the *constitutional division of competence*, and the legal opportunity to engage the sub-state in democracy promotion activities. Flanders is constitutionally sovereign in many aspects of foreign affairs, and programmes such as the CEEP or bilateral relations were wholly legal if a Flemish government desired to engage in such activities. The Welsh legislature on the other hand benefitted from a vague and previously unimportant clause in its constitution which was redefined, without opposition, to justify the international promotion of its democracy. Opportunities were created by the constitutional set-up for explicit promotion of democracy.

While the legal basis and resource capacity was also potentially present in the Maryland case, strict *IGR* prohibited the executive from engaging in political paradiplomacy. Even when vague as in the Maryland case, a constitutional settlement can be given more precise meaning through the *IGR*, and though technically able to attach human rights clauses to its domestic legislation, US states have been refrained from doing so by the federal level. This finding suggests that it is still useful to make distinctions between

different 'types' of paradiplomacy, for the same IGR have allowed and facilitated economic or co-operational paradiplomacy. The constitution and IGR are very closely linked, the latter enforcing, circumventing, or giving specific meaning to the former. IGR is a key variable that must be understood as a structuring factor alongside the constitution and resource/capacity with regard to explicit democracy promotion.

The issues of sub-state representation within national foreign policy structures highlighted by the Lecourian framework played less of a role in structuring opportunities for explicit democracy promotion. The activity by definition attempts to establish the sub-state as a distinct actor. Even if there is a possibility of contributing as part of the central state's democracy promotion – which in the Welsh legislature's case there is, via the WFD – it is not an opportunity to satisfy the objectives of explicit democracy promotion. It strongly suggests that promoting democracy is at most, just one of the aims of explicit democracy promotion – an issue discussed in detail below. An equally, if not more important aim is to distinguish the sub-state and its activity from the central state. The determination to act outside the central state's structures for foreign policy is itself telling with regard to the aims of the Flemish government's CEEP and bilateral relations, and the Welsh legislature's activities. Regardless of avenues to influence and to take part in the central state's foreign activities, they deliberately chose not to do so, and to engage independently. Indeed, a feature of explicit democracy promotion is the desire to act independently as the sub-state, regardless of alternative routes to the activity.

The continental level structures, namely the EU, international organizations and associated industry norms were but minor influences upon explicit democracy promotion; they did not structure opportunities for sub-states to initiate activities, rather, they only provided a reference and source of knowledge and norms to which to align at later stages. Only during the second phase of the CEEP, when political interest from the Flemish government had waned, did its management begin to align explicitly to the norms, targets and practices of the EU's PHARE or TACIS programmes. Again, this strongly suggests that establishing a distinctiveness with regard to the activity is an early aim of explicit democracy promotion.

Further supporting the latter notion was the finding that sub-states are somewhat different to other democracy promotion actors when explicitly promoting democracy. Sub-states do not establish intermediate foundations to manage their programmes – management is often “in-house”, even if the political lead and interest wanes after the initial establishment and initiation. The “client” is different also; either elements of the sub-state itself (Wales), or groups from civil society (Flanders) who are invited to “conduct” the democracy promotion work. This results in original and innovative promotional work, initially removed from the ‘industry’ standards and norms. Only over time does the democracy promotion move toward those norms, at the expense of distinctiveness; though not in all cases. Taking advantage of established continental opportunities and channels for promoting democracy would undermine the distinctiveness. Meanwhile, although they were not restricted, it must be noted that the explicit activities explored in the cases did not threaten or contradict the *central state’s foreign policy*.

On the global level however, we note two further opportunity structures that allow for explicit democracy promotion. Firstly, the *dampening security context* following the demise of the Soviet Union and an ideologically competitive international context are explicitly referred to in the Flemish case as facilitating factors, creating the opportunity for the sub-state to engage with partners without being considered a political or ideological threat. Debates may continue regarding Fukuyama’s (1992) end of history thesis, but the data collected here suggests that the great liberal projects of the 1990s, promoting democracy and engaging in international development, were attractive activities that sub-states could, and wanted to engage in.

Secondly, and linked to the previous factor discussed, is the willingness of *partners* to engage with sub-states in this new international context. The openness of the Central and Eastern European Countries, Chile, South Africa, and all of Wales’ partners, to establishing relationships involving the promotion of democracy and governance programmes is the prerequisite for being able to promote democracy.

In summary, the key opportunity structures for explicit sub-state democracy promotion are the capacity and competence of the sub-state itself, factors often mitigated or

constrained by the IGR between it and the central state. The opportunity for explicit democracy promotion, as with political paradiplomacy in general, is often withheld from sub-states by the central states through the constitution, backed by disciplining IGR. Secondly, the facilitation of international partnerships between sub-states and other partners is a key factor which is itself influenced by the broader global security and political context.

7.1.1 Agency and motivations for explicit democracy promotion

In the case of explicit democracy promotion, the agency of the sub-state government or legislature was key. Regional political forces had mobilised the governance structures and its resources to capitalise on the opportunities to promote democracy. The Flemish CD&V government was the most prominent example as it strategically directed the resources of the sub-state into the CEEP and its bilateral relations. The PO in Wales – with cross-party ambivalence if not support – also mobilised the newly empowered legislature to capitalise on structural opportunities to promote democracy as part of a broader legitimacy building project. In both cases however, the domestic political context was key in structuring the motivations for these actors to engage in the explicit promotion of democracy abroad. As a means of projecting a particular notion of Flanders, or to “advertise” Welsh democracy both abroad and at home.

Worthy of note also is the timing of the establishment of these activities. The PO was quick to establish these activities once his office had received the additional resources and freedom of action, very early in its existence. The Flemish Christian Democrats meanwhile had conceived of the CEEP before the ink had dried on the 1993 reforms, and all activities in question were established during the first term (1995-1999).

Despite changes to governments, the powers, and global political context, no further instances of explicit democracy promotion were noted beyond the early endeavours. Neither case saw significant efforts to reform or renew the activities. Political interest and lead for the already established activities diminished with time, leading to either a continuation of broadly the same activities (Wales and Flemish bilateral relations) – an instance of path dependency in action – or a gradual shift toward global norms and practices within the same industry until the eventual expiration (CEEP). Indeed, there is

perhaps a suggestion that sub-states do not suffer from the complications that arise from shifting short term priorities of democracy promoters explored in chapter 1 (see Carothers, 2009b; Hook, 2002); once established, there is little or no political interference in these activities.

In the case of explicit democracy promotion, the key agency comes from regional political forces, motivated by domestic political setting, mobilising the sub-state structures to exploit opportunities structured by the constitution, capacity and potential partners (themselves reliant on facilitating global contexts at particular periods of time) to promote democracy deliberately, and independently of other actors. The forces need not necessarily be nationalists however, and the activities were established during the early, formative period of the sub-state's existence.

7.2 Implicit democracy promotion

Implicit democracy promotion involves the sub-state's activities inadvertently contributing to, or where the aims of the activities are not explicitly stated as to promote democracy. They are in this sense, activities that seek to affect socio-political change elsewhere, and are therefore a form of political paradiplomacy. But the aim is not explicitly to promote democracy. The development programmes of Wales and Flanders for example would involve an implicit promotion of democracy. Both programmes seek to support the development process in other countries, and not to explicitly promote democracy, though governance projects are demonstrably a part of the programmes. In engaging in implicit democracy promotion, sub-states are actors in the broader, developmental understanding of democracy promotion noted in chapter 1 (see Carothers, 2009).

Constitutional set-ups are key opportunity structures if, as in Flanders, they explicitly place upon the sub-state a responsibility to engage in international development. Such constitutional allocation of power would be expected to be accompanied by the allocation of *resources* for the job. From then, Flanders sought to engage in international development as a state might.

In the absence of a clear constitutional empowerment however, the *IGR* and the willingness to re-interpret the semi-legal rules of international activities can also facilitate sub-state engagement. Where that constitutional allocation of competence for activities is ambiguous as in the Welsh case, IGR again emerge as a key structure that can give specific meaning to such constitutional ambiguities. Equally important however was the understanding of international development as a depoliticized activity that does not challenge the central state's foreign policy. The central government sees Welsh international development either as an activity that is not political, or at the very most, an activity that does not challenge its own foreign policy position; perhaps even contributing to it. An important context is the period where international development has become a global "good cause", with Live Eight, Gleneagles, and Make Poverty History dominating headlines in the Welsh case. It is perceived as an altruistic, more acceptable, and less controversial activity than explicit democracy promotion. It nonetheless became an activity – by adopting broader practices – that implicitly encouraged governance reform in partner countries.

The key opportunity structure that turns development into democracy promotion are the *global norms* of the development industry for they have in all cases been deliberately emulated and adopted as sub-states engaged in international development. This process of 'transnational communication' reflects what other authors have noted in other fields (see Holzinger, Knill and Sommerer, 2008; and Audet and Gendron, 2012; de la Pena Varona and Hinojal, 2012), though in this case it is deliberately sought. It is in emulating these norms and practices of reforming governance that sub-state international development implicitly promotes democracy. The inclusion of global norms within the framework was justified by theory (see chapter 3), and also in hindsight by the data. The findings also emphasize the importance and influence of global norms, practices, and the power of a dominant development discourse in shaping the approaches of new actors to the field.

Again, much like explicit democracy promotion, *representation within the state's foreign policy structures* was not a pertinent opportunity structure as, the sub-state sought its own, distinctive development programme. Continental or international institutions did not create opportunities either, also due to the distinctiveness and independence of

action sought by the sub-states. The development work itself meanwhile did not contradict or threaten the central state's efforts or *foreign policy*.

Key opportunity structures in this case are therefore the *constitutional division of context* and *accompanying resources* to engage in international development. The IGR meanwhile can give clarity to vague constitutional settlements and facilitate or allow the activity. More broadly, it is difficult to understand implicit sub-state democracy promotion outside the context of the development *norms and practices* that are emulated and propagated by sub-states. Given the proliferation of sub-state involvement in development assistance (see Cornago, 2010b), this type is likely to be the most prevalent form of sub-state democracy promotion in the world.

7.2.1 Agency and motivations for the implicit promotion of democracy

The sub-state government is the key actor with regard to implicit democracy promotion. Motivated by *domestic political contexts*, regional political forces mobilise the sub-state's resources to engage in international development partnerships. This was the case in both Welsh and Flemish cases where the respective government was presented with an opportunity to engage the sub-state in international development. In the Welsh case, the *domestic political context motivated its government to seek to project a particular notion of Wales abroad and at home, while Flanders sought to emulate a particular type of altruistic, state-like behaviour*.

However, neither Wales nor Flanders demonstrated much, if any agency with regard to the development of the activities once established. Beyond establishing and funding the programmes, political involvement was minimal, and there was no sign of any attempts to capitalize on any broader benefits or opportunities that might arise. Though constrained somewhat in the Welsh case by the unique legal set-up, programmes in both cases were designed to emulate the international norms and practices of the industry, with no role for the sub-state's government beyond approving the finances, and even levels of spending are influenced by the global consensus upon the expenditure of 0.7% of GDP. As noted, sub-state governments are hollow actors in the field of international development, not seeking to challenge or reform the political or conceptual underpinnings of the practice. Consequently, the dominant development

discourse is adopted, perpetuated, and even propagated further by sub-states. The governments want to “do” development, how it’s done is left to the coordinating bodies. Sub-states are in that sense, when implicitly promoting democracy, hollow actors, devoid of political input and engagement with the activity itself. “Doing” international development is objective for politicians, not “how it’s done”. For the coordinating bodies, the objective is to “do it well” and display best practice and adopt the governance projects.

This finding may be of particular interest to scholars of international development, suggesting as it does, the hegemonic nature of the international development discourse. Associated with the powerful discourse is the equally influential belief and confidence that the development industry is the source of best practice. The development industry know how to “do” development better than anybody else and coordinating bodies take their lead from it.

7.3 Subcontracted democracy promotion

Sub-states, their legislatures and staff are subcontracted by national level organizations to form a part of their broader democracy packages. In Maryland, the NCSL, either on its own or at the behest of other organizations; the MCI on behalf of China and with federal support; the US National Guard as part of broader military organizations; individual staff members for the OWP and other democracy organizations; and the Welsh legislature and staff members in the name of the WFD and other democracy organizations, all promote democracy. The defining feature is that despite being sub-state officials, knowledge, and experience, they promote democracy on behalf of other actors, not the sub-state. The national level organization is the actor, but through the use of sub-state personnel and knowledge, and in this case, the sub-state itself is not an actor.

In all cases of subcontracted democracy promotion, the Lecourian framework must be shifted, for the sub-state is not an actor, and does not navigate its agency through the opportunity structures. Rather, the democracy organizations are the actors and the sub-state officials an opportunity structure for them; a source of knowledge and personnel, and a means of promoting democracy in a particular and often different way. Indeed, a

characteristic of this type is that it is most prevalent where the agency of the sub-state executive to engage in political paradiplomacy and explicit democracy promotion is at its lowest, in Wales and Maryland.

The Federal government in the US for example, saw the states' National Guard as a tool to be operationalized in support of broader endeavours, and a means of better meeting its foreign policy during the 1990s. Its support of UMD and the MCI was also a means of enabling democracy to be promoted in China when its own relations restricted the activity. Wales' legislature, its staff and their expertise was identified by the WFD as a means of 'enriching' their own product in an increasingly market-like environment for democracy organizations. *Global factors* and *foreign policy* are important, but more in relation to the national level organization than the sub-state being subcontracted. In this regard, the foreign policy of the central state is a crucial factor in understanding why subcontracting to the sub-state becomes a viable or preferable option, though only further research on the motivations of democracy organizations can fully explore this.

Ultimately, with regard to subcontracted democracy promotion, sub-states, their staff, and their expertise should be understood as opportunity structures for those national level organizations who wish to bypass and overcome difficulties often deriving from the central state's *foreign policy*.

7.3.1 Agency and subcontracted democracy promotion

In the case of subcontracted democracy promotion, agency does not come from the sub-state governance structures. The sub-state, as a political entity, is not mobilised for the purposes of promoting democracy and is not a democracy promotion actor. However its resources, its staff, and its particular knowledge, is "used" by other actors. National level organizations display agency in this case; the WFD, NCSL, NDI, IRI, OWP, the State Department, and the national level military organizations are the actors. For them, as actors within their own version of a Lecourian framework, sub-states represent an opportunity structure.

Sub states are a means by which democracy promotion can be engaged in. The benefit of doing so, as opposed to using their own resources, concerns the ability of sub-state

staff and knowledge to overcome the challenges and difficulties presented by their own relations with a particular partner – often due to the nature of the state’s foreign policy. The National Guard are better placed to present a less-aggressive posture than the US national forces. Maryland staff are politically acceptable governance tutors for both China and the Federal government. Maryland staff also have the capacity to impart a particular knowledge, not available either in the private sector or at the national level organizations, and Wales can likewise enrich what the WFD offer in an increasingly competitive “market” of democracy support. Either way, sub-states present opportunities for national level actors to promote democracy in particular ways.

Individuals at the sub-state level do however display a degree of personal agency in cases of subcontracted democracy promotion. Their willingness to contribute, often voluntarily, is an essential requirement for subcontracting. In doing so, the individuals surrender control of the medium, method, partner, and broader package of democracy being promoted. However, data suggests that, in both the US and Welsh cases, the individuals were still in control of their own message and knowledge.

It has been argued in this section that there are three types of sub-state democracy promotion. Both explicit and implicit democracy promotion are instances where regional agency is key, alongside the division of competence and a globally permissive political context. The sub-state governance structures are mobilized and the sub-state can be considered the actor in these instances. Implicit democracy promotion is particularly influenced by global development norms, practices, and discourse as well as its depoliticized understanding. However a third type involves the staff and expertise within the sub-state being subcontracted by other organizations. In these instances, the sub-state acts as an opportunity structure for national level organizations and thus cannot be understood as a democracy promotion actor.

7.4 Further features of sub-state democracy promotion

By building upon the three types outlined in the previous section, by also relating to the prominent themes of the IR and paradiplomacy scholarship, and introducing further factors identified in the empirical investigation, this section will further enrich the understanding of sub-state democracy promotion. The section will explore further

aspects that add to the understanding of the what, when, and why of sub-state democracy promotion. The discussion will relate specifically to the prominent themes present within the democracy promotion literature that were identified in chapter 1, such as the nature and understanding of the democracy being promoted, the location, and method of delivery. The section will also explore key factors emphasized by paradiplomacy scholars, such as the role of nationalism. It will also introduce new factors that have emerged from the cases and the particular theoretical approach as being of importance to further enrich the understanding. Specifically, these are the critical junctures at particular times, and the historical context. Finally, the notion of promoting democracy as a symbolic activity, engaged in as a means of constructing the sub-state's actorness is introduced as a means of understanding and understanding explicit and implicit sub-state democracy promotion.

7.4.1 Sub-state democratic knowledge and expertise

The first notable aspect characterising sub-state democracy promotion concerns the model or aspects of democracy sub-states promote. Sub-states explored in this project have frequently promoted similar aspects of democratic governance practice. Given the similarity, it may be suggested that sub-states can, and have tended to promote similar aspects of democratic governance. In all cases there is at least a modest belief, and at times a deliberate advertising that the sub-state exhibits, and is therefore capable of promoting, particular elements of democratic governance. All three cases displayed an awareness of, and a willingness to promote, particular elements of democracy that were common to each. Themes of transparency, scrutiny of legislation and expenditure, accountability, and equality of access to governance structures are consistent areas where sub-state officials are frequently involved, imparting their knowledge and expertise.

Flemish planners attempted to stamp a distinctive element to the democracy and governance component of the programme by emphasizing the concept of *overleg*; consultative and deliberative democratic governance, inclusive of civil society. Maryland practitioners offer practical knowledge of institutionalising and addressing issues of accountability, transparency, accessibility, and efficacy. 'Welsh democracy'

itself is reflective of the values of inclusivity and its promotion involves the transfer of knowledge, expertise, and experience of enhancing democratic accountability, transparency, access, and openness.

However, this distinctive knowledge was not reflected within the international development programmes that tended to emulate standard industry governance projects. With time also, as the CEEP adopted the EU and industry standards, norms, and practices, the distinctiveness of the Flemish governance support dwindled. Sub-state democracy is distinctive in within the explicit and subcontracted types of democracy promotion where sub-state officials control their message and content. But where global norms and practices are emulated, most notably in the field of international development and therefore the implicit category here, sub-state democracy has not proved as prominent a feature. Nonetheless, in the cases of explicit and subcontracted sub-state democracy promotion, we may refer to a distinctive, and similar democratic governance knowledge. This distinctiveness may suggest why it is subcontracted, an issue discussed below, as well as a potential starting point for further research into conceptions of democracy at the sub-state level.

With regard to the understanding of sub-state democracy promotion, it is enriched by noting that sub-states can and tend to, when not emulating global norms and practices, promote particular aspects of democratic governance. These can aspects can be understood as being of a more inclusive and deliberative model of democracy with an emphasis on citizen engagement.

7.4.2 Location and partners

The choice of partner and location for both explicit and implicit democracy promotion is heavily influenced by the way in which the opportunities are structured. The global level political context in particular is often the key factor dictating where sub-states may engage. Flanders and the Maryland National Guard found the post-Soviet opening of Central and Eastern Europe very accommodating. Likewise, the transition of Chilean society presented Flanders with a further opportunity to support democracy.

Importantly, the security context of the 1990s facilitated the engagement of new actors in the great liberal missions of the decade. An existing domestic connection was present in Flanders (with Chile) and Wales (with Africa) which may be worthy of note with regard to the choice of partner, but there are equally, if not more significant connections with other potential partners. The global international development community's consensus on LDCs meanwhile has been an important factor in the choice of both Flemish and Welsh partners. The national level organizations that subcontract may also dictate the location and partner of all subcontracted democracy promotion.

7.4.3 Method of delivery

How sub-state democracy promotion is conducted can be conditioned by both internal and external factors. Explicit democracy promotion in particular is characterised by original methods of delivery as the sub-states seek to establish anew their programmes. Flanders' CEEP was originally a whole-of-society approach using organizations from Flemish society, designed by the government department when engaging with a transitioning society while the engagement with Chile was developed in partnership. Meanwhile, the Welsh legislature has developed its own form of delivering their knowledge to partners; "showcasing" through their tailored visitor programmes. Sub-states are sometimes able to develop their own distinctive mediums for transferring knowledge.

However, the medium and form of delivery is also and often influenced by structures outside the sub-state. The Welsh legislature was restricted to the rules of the networks through which they promote their democracy. The Flemish CEEP was increasingly brought into line with the broader European engagement with the same countries.

With regard implicit democracy promotion through development assistance, we see not a conditioning of the form the sub-state activities take, but a self-disciplined attempt by the sub-state governments to adopt and emulate the norms and practices of the industry; to become a good development partner. In both cases of international development, the sub-state explicitly sought to incorporate the industry's practices and their norms into their own projects. Both also propagated the development discourse amongst either the practitioners (Wales) or more generally through regional level

education programmes (Flanders). Sub-states are enthusiastic proponents and practitioners of the global development discourse, rarely if ever challenging the its associated practices or norms.

Subcontracted democracy promotion meanwhile, is entirely dependent upon the organizations sourcing their expertise with regard to methods. Partners are selected for their knowledge which fits within the contracting organizations' broader package. The sub-state governance structures are not involved, and the individuals that are subcontracted wield little if any control over the method or the broader context in these instances.

7.4.4 Nationalism?

Several scholars claim that paradiplomacy contributes to the pursuit of core nationalist objectives, namely the construction and consolidation of a distinctive identity as an international actor (Kuznetsov, 2015: 110; Lecours and Moreno, 2003; Paquin and Lachapelle, 2005: 82-85). Paradiplomacy offers a means of defining and articulating a 'national interest' and potentially achieving a degree of political-territorial mobilization (Lecours and Moreno, 2003; Keating, 1997: 708; Paquin and Lachapelle, 2005: 84; Lecours, 2008: 3). The cases illustrated that explicit and implicit democracy promotion do present opportunities to construct a distinctive identity and projecting a (sub-)national interest, indeed this was the Flemish government's explicit goal. Subcontracted democracy promotion however, distinctive by the lack of agency or role for the sub-state, cannot be seen to contribute to those nationalist objectives; the sub-state is not mobilised in the same sense.

Data shows however that nationalist parties are not the most enthusiastic initiators of explicit or implicit democracy promotion. State-wide parties also seek to explicitly and implicitly promote democracy, indeed have shown themselves to be more enthusiastic in doing so. In Flanders, the Christian Democrats (CD&V) in government pioneered the sub-state's foreign policy and activities, not the nationalist parties such as the Volksunie, who never topped 9.3% of the vote in Flanders. Nor did their successors, the NVA, who did not stand until the 2004 Flemish elections, seek to initiate new explicit democracy promotion activities. Furthermore, as the NVA grew into a credible and

genuine competitor for government, and largest party by the late 2000s, political interest in international affairs was diminishing. The NVA (nor Liberal party) looked to develop Flanders' international activities further, with the exception of emphasizing the economic benefits.

In Wales meanwhile, the unionist Labour party was particularly keen to develop an independent and distinctly Welsh international development programme, not the nationalist party, Plaid Cymru. Both Welsh Labour and the CD&V, it is demonstrated in the respective chapters, developed these activities to project a particular image of the sub-state, and at least partly because of the perceived domestic impact it would have. Non-nationalist political parties have proved the most enthusiastic explicit and implicit promoters of democracy.

On the one hand, the data suggests that the role of nationalism in "pushing" the development of paradiplomacy within a sub-state is at least more nuanced. Unionist, state-wide, or non-nationalist parties in government have enthusiastically engaged in explicit democracy promotion, sometimes more so than nationalist parties in government. It suggests not only, as others have argued (see Keating, 1997; 2013: 158; McEwen and Moreno, 2005), that governments in devolved territories engage in stateless nation building, but that unionist and non-nationalist governments do so too. There are "soft-nationalists" at the sub-state level, who also see a sub-state or sub-national identity as a focus for solidarity, and attempt to appeal to and cultivate that solidarity. It's notable for example that the two instances noted are Wales and Flanders, where (stateless) national identities predate the governance structures, and there was an existing basis from which to cultivate such solidarity.

On the other hand, the nationalism argument is unsatisfactory and contradicted by the empirical data. In the Flemish case in particular, it was noted that the NVA's interest in developing paradiplomacy in 2004 or 2014 (when holding the portfolio), was relatively low in comparison to the CD&V's from 1993-1999. Moreover, in both Welsh and Flemish cases, after an initial flurry of activity, interest in establishing new activities, or even maintaining active programmes, waned. This finding suggests there is a temporal factor that merits consideration.

7.4.5 Post-juncture period

Critical junctures are important concepts for historical institutionalists, and the concept opens the way to an alternative explanation as to why democracy promotion activities are initiated. Junctures are periods where institutions, and the rules and paths they structure are reformed. Within these periods, the decisions and actions of actors are key in re-shaping the institutions that go on to impact the paths and set the 'rules of the game' in the future (see Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007: 348). A notable correlation exists in the cases studies between critical constitutional junctures and the period where democracy promotion activities are initiated. It is argued here that the period following the constitutional junctures represent key opportunities to define the character of the sub-state following a change in its institutional nature.

A key factor with regard to why Maryland doesn't seek to engage in the promotion of democracy (or indeed any political activities abroad), may concern the constitutional status, and broader "rules" of the sub-state's paradiplomacy. A founding colony of the USA, Maryland predates the central state as a political, geographic and constitutional entity. Its international role, its actorness, is already defined, and there is no trace of any effort at the domestic level to (re-)construct or change that actorness for any reason. According to historical institutionalist theory, it will take a critical juncture or a period of institutional dynamism for the role and rules of Maryland's engagement to change.

Such periods of dynamism can be identified during the 1990s when attempts were made to reform or redefine states' international roles, most notably with the Massachusetts Burma Law and later with human rights related statements in the Maryland legislature. But these efforts were stopped by the federal government. The rules were rewritten and US states' international role was redefined, or rather clarified. Politics was not something that states engaged in internationally. Maryland has consequently been deprived of opportunities to become a democracy promoter, explicitly or implicitly.

Individuals within Maryland are explicitly pursuing the promotion of democracy abroad. But they do not seek to mobilize the governance structures to do so. There are established avenues for the promotion of democracy, through the extensively developed

federal structures and democracy organizations, or the civil society organizations that work alongside federal programmes. Their engagement is far more instrumental – preoccupied with the activity itself – not with changing what Maryland does, or (re-)constructing its actorness by seeking opportunities to engage in democracy promotion.

Both Wales and Flanders meanwhile, developed and engaged in explicit and implicit democracy promotion during an early, and formative period of the sub-state's existence, shortly after the critical constitutional junctures of devolution. The CEEP, Chile and South African bilateral programmes were initiated during the mid-first term of the first post-1993 government. The Welsh government began developing its international development programme at an early stage as a reaction to the 1999 election result, to be launched during the second Assembly term. The legislature's efforts to promote the concept of "Welsh" democracy was also initiated at a very early stage in the new institution's life once the PO's role was redefined – itself identified in chapter 6 as a critical constitutional juncture. In all cases, the international character or actorness – what the sub-state could or did do, or which values it was aligned to – had not been fully defined. Explicit and implicit democracy promotion activities, at least in part, defined that international character at an early, more ambiguous stage. During such periods, in keeping with institutionalist notions of critical junctures, the newly established rules of international activity were yet to be clarified. Maryland's actorness in contrast, has been far more clearly defined within a long established federal system.

In short, here was a relatively blank canvass upon which political forces could, given the opportunity, project an image of what the new sub-state did around the world and what kind of international actor it was. Maryland's canvass has been coloured for centuries, by its own past, by the actorness of the 49 other federal states sharing the same constitutional and legal structure, and by the process of clarification following attempts at revising the rules of paradiplomacy during the 1990s. In Wales and Flanders, the rules of paradiplomacy either facilitated explicit or implicit democracy promotion (Flanders), or were open enough to mediation (Wales). For Wales and Flanders, promoting democracy explicitly and implicitly have been a means of influencing the rules of international activity. A means of constructing and establishing their own

actorness at a key, formative period of their existence. It may even be noted as a distinctive phase in the evolution of the institutions.

7.4.6 When do they, and when can they promote democracy?

Coinciding with periods where Flanders and Wales engage in international development and democracy promotion, global level developments make democracy promotion and development particularly attractive means of constructing actorness. There is a notable correlation between the expansion and development of sub-state democracy promotion and the demise of the Soviet Union. The initiation of explicit and implicit democracy promotion activities coincide with both the immediate period after the constitutional and political empowerment of those sub-states, and this particular global security and political context.

As well as the demise of the Soviet Union, the fall of the Pinochet and Apartheid regimes led to a far more acceptable political context where Flanders could lend support to Chile and South Africa. Here was an opportunity for Flanders to join the great liberal crusade of the 1990s, helping to bring democracy and market capitalism to new areas of the world. Far more difficult would be any attempt to do something similar post-Arab Spring, in difficult, perhaps volatile political contexts and in a time of constrained budgets at home.

With regard to international development, the G8 in Gleneagles, the Make Poverty History campaign, and Live Eight were the background to the development of both the Wales for Africa programme and the establishment of FICA. Africa was a global focus for the development industry at a time when the designers of Welsh and Flemish development assistance looked to that industry as it developed its own international development programme. The particular period of international development history is a key consideration when attempting to understand the Flemish and Welsh programmes.

The historical domestic context also heavily influenced, if not explains the motivation for explicit democracy promotion. The political context surrounding the institutions of devolution in Wales during its formative years were important considerations. The

question of legitimacy hung ominously for its supporters, and a strengthening and construction of further legitimacy, beyond the flimsy democratic majority in its favour, was an important motivation for key actors within the institutions in those early years. The desire to construct legitimacy has been shown to be a key motivation for the first Presiding Officer of the Assembly, Dafydd Elis-Thomas. The political context and nature of the structuring institutions themselves at particular periods are key factors, not only in conditioning the activities of political forces, but also in conditioning their motivations and objectives; as historical institutionalism claims, a symbiotic relationship between the actor and structure.

Finally, to repeat a point regarding the critical constitutional juncture and status of the “rules” of the sub-state’s paradiplomacy, both Flanders and Wales began developing their international activities during the very early years of their existence as new political entities. This was a period where their actorness was not clearly defined, either by constitution or convention. At that time, both executives (and the legislature) looked to take advantage of the ambiguity surrounding the rules of paradiplomacy, and construct their actorness by engaging in explicit and implicit democracy promotion. Maryland meanwhile in the same period was constrained by both its constitution and its conventions regarding international activities. It was not able to engage in explicit or implicit democracy promotion.

Since this formative period, neither Wales nor Flanders have engaged in any attempts to redefine their actorness in the international realm. Indeed, political interest and lead in the explicit and implicit activities waned and vanished once the activities were established. This is a strong suggestion that the activities had achieved their aims once established, regardless of the democratic or developmental state of the partner country.

What is evident from the historical institutionalist approach therefore, is that particular periods are more conducive to sub-state democracy promotion than others. The post-Soviet 1990s and the depoliticization of development are key factors that exist at a particular period. This period coincides with the early, formative period of the then new Flemish and Welsh sub-states, themselves a particularly conducive period for establishing and influencing the rules of paradiplomacy. This was a period where the

rules of international activities were not set in stone, where regional political agency could influence and define what the sub-state did internationally, and construct the international actorness of the sub-state.

The Lecourian, historical institutionalist approach therefore argues that sub-states engagement in democracy promotion is often structured by factors at regional, national, and global levels. Both the location and method of delivery for example are often factors that are heavily influenced by external factors. Why and when they do so however is not, as is theorised elsewhere, due to the presence and agency of nationalist parties, the data does not support such a claim. Rather, it is argued that a combination of agency and opportunity to define the international character, or actorness of the sub-state at key periods in history, and their existence, explains why and when sub-states explicitly or implicitly promote democracy. The next section further explores this understanding by presenting the concept of “constructing actorness” as a means of understanding explicit and implicit sub-state democracy promotion.

7.4.7 Constructing actorness

By engaging in explicit and implicit democracy promotion, Wales and Flanders have been able to define through activity and association, the type of international actor they are. Explicit and implicit activities are a means by which the sub-states can define their actorness and nature as international actors. These activities were particularly useful means of doing so when that actorness was ill-defined, and the rules ambiguous – during a formative, post-juncture period of the sub-state’s existence.

It should be stated again however that explicit or implicit democracy promotion may satisfy a number of motivations. Attached to the attempts to construct the actorness are sometimes, as witnessed in the CEEP, attempts to link harder economic interests to the activities. “Inserting” Flemish companies into the developing markets of Central and Eastern Europe was certainly a beneficial aspect of the aforementioned activities, benefits that were designed and planned for alongside the governance support. This was not the case however in Wales or to any significant extent with other Flemish activities such as the Chile partnership. Explicit democracy promotion can nonetheless satisfy several motivations, beyond that of constructing actorness. This section focusses

however upon the construction of actorness as at least one motivation behind promoting democracy.

By making a decision to promote democracy, sub-states are constructing an element of their own actorness. Sub-states are deciding themselves which activities they will pursue, and which they will not. They are defining the character of their international engagement and aligning implicitly or explicitly with values associated with the activities in which they engage. Constructing actorness is not a case of performing a role or living up to a preconceived notion of what the sub-state should be and how it should act. Rather, is a more formative or precursory part of the process – the establishment of that role, the writing of the rules, and the construction of the conception of what the sub-state is, and what it does internationally. Explicit and implicit democracy promotion are ways in which the sub-state's actorness can be constructed and defined; a means by which the sub-state can demonstrate what it does and what type of actor it is.

For this reason, the timing of these activities – during a formative period with fewer preconceptions or established roles or rules, is a very important factor. It is by its nature, a critical juncture where rules can be established. The luxury that the political forces responsible hold, nationalist or not, is that they may, opportunity allowing, select and design their own actorness. Those forces may attempt to define what type of actor their sub-state is internationally, what it does and what values it reflects in its foreign policy.

Furthermore, the choice of activities can also be understood within this context. The activities chosen allow the sub-state to align to particular values; democracy and development. The CEEP allowed Flanders to align to the great European project of integration and democracy of the 1990s. Its bilateral partnerships with Chile and South Africa allowed it to claim a role in the headline liberal revolutions of the decade. Wales' legislature could place the notion of 'Welsh' democracy alongside other legitimate democracies. Its government meanwhile was able to align with the outward-looking, globally empathetic values of the international development movement, and the Make Poverty History campaign. Flanders also, alongside Wales, drew on and aligned to the internationalized conceptualizations of development to ensure legitimacy in the field

when practicing, The choice of activity is telling with regard to the kind of actorness the sub-state is attempting to construct.

The governments need not embroil themselves in the murky waters of international politics, signing arms-treaties with human-rights abusers, or doing deals with terrorists. They may opt for the depoliticized, uncontroversial, and uncritically celebrated activities of international development, or the promotion of democracy; the great crusades of 1990s liberal internationalism. Flemish and Welsh activities were deliberately selected so as to construct the most positive image of their actorness both internationally and, importantly, domestically. Over time, there has been less agency and political involvement in attempting to push the sub-state into certain activities and construct a particular actorness. This supports the suggestion that after the formative period, after the actorness had been constructed, there was no need for further involvement. The activity had served its political purpose, but had also established a 'path' upon which future governments and POs were dependent.

7.4.8 Democracy Promotion as a symbolic activity

Not unconnected to the notion of engaging in an activity in order to gain legitimacy from others in the community, is the notion of 'symbolic politics'. Some authors have suggested that sustainable development policies, legislation and regulation are more a case of being seen by a particular audience to perform a particular role than any constructive engagement with the field (see Blühdorn, 2007; Baker, 2007; Newig, 2007). Strategies can be rhetorically committed to particular aims but the implementation of policy is nevertheless 'lacking in bite' (Blühdorn's category B) or simply not designed to tackle the problem; being seen to try to tackle the problem is of more political value to the policy-maker than actually tackling the problem (category A); the practice of making empty rhetorical commitments. The real aim of policies deriving from the practice of symbolic politics is not to impact effectively upon the field, but rather it is more strategic and political; to exhibit a commitment on behalf of the policy-makers to a particular ideal. It is claimed for example that 'contemporary environmental policy is much more a performative process than a leverage to tackle the roots of environmental crisis' (Audet and Gendron, 2012: 41-42). This thesis argues that the promotion of

democracy can also be understood as a similarly performative process, its real aim being to construct a particular notion of the sub-state's actorness. It can be seen

As a tool of political integration and mobilisation, i.e. a tool for creating a sense of unity and community among a group of people and for providing them with a shared narrative about their current situation, their political goals and their collective political agency... (Blühdorn, 2007: 255).

This concept presents sub-state political paradiplomacy in a new light, but is not far from established theories. Both Lecours (2002: 100) and Crikemans (2006: 16), as noted in chapter 2, claim that sub-states align to transnational networks in order to define their international role, while Keating, (1997: 702) hints toward similar notions regarding the use of paradiplomacy to consolidate notions of the nation at home. The claim here is that, during a key formative period, alignment to particular values and activities by 'performing' the role of democracy promoter and international development donor, are also means of constructing their international role and actorness.

Supporting this notion is the absence of engagement with key agendas. Over time, political interest and lead was dropped with regard to the CEEP, bilateral relations, the WfA, and Flanders' development programme. Sub-states also emulate global norms and practices, but fail to engage constructively or critically with the agenda, and becoming 'hollow' actors. Even when, in the absence of expertise, sub-states develop original and arguably successful practices and means of engaging in international development or the promotion of democracy, with time and exposure, both Wales and Flanders sought to shed as much of that originality in an attempt to emulate the established norms and practices. This was particularly apparent with regard to international development, but also in the development of the CEEP over time. Engagement with the activity and agenda is not prioritised, but emulation of norms and practices – performing the role as best they can – is a strategic priority for much explicit and implicit sub-state democracy promotion.

Sub-states, at key, formative periods of their existence, have attempted to engage in explicit and implicit democracy promotion, at least in part, in order to align with particular values and identity as an international actor. The choice of activity reflects

the desire to align with certain values and the construction of a very specific international actorness befitting the liberal internationalist zeitgeist at the time of their inception. As with sub-state alignment to transnational networks, it is a form of symbolic performance rather than a constructive engagement. The aim is to project a favourable image of the sub-state, to define through activity what the sub-state does and what values it projects, and to influence the notion of its international character. To construct its own actorness.

7.5 Concluding remarks: How, when and why do sub-states promote democracy?

By way of conclusion to the chapter, the following paragraph will summarise how, when and why sub-states promote democracy.

Sub-states promote democracy. By engaging in explicit or implicit democracy promotion specifically, sub-states are democracy promotion actors, much like other actors established within the academic literature. In being subcontracted however, sub-states are not actors, but are key to understanding the contracting actor's democracy promotion. In applying the Lecourian framework, further analytical claims have been made with regard to the key opportunity structures and key factors that relate to the how, when and why of the three types of sub-state democracy promotion.

The key opportunity structures with regard to how sub-states explicitly promote democracy are the *constitutional competence* and *institutional capacity of the sub-state* to engage in political paradiplomatic activity. The *IGR* can mediate or give specific meaning to ambiguous constitutional arrangements. In Maryland for example, though not specified or detailed in the constitution, the *IGR* have established and reiterated over time, a clear rule that sub-states do not engage in political paradiplomacy. But where the sub-state has the capacity and competence, agents may wish to take advantage of the opportunity. The willingness of *partners* to engage was also crucial.

The post-juncture period, shortly after constitutional reform and decentralization of competence emerged as a key period for explicit democracy promotion. In this period, coinciding with key historical periods where the global political context was particularly

facilitating, sub-states are seen to initiate their engagement in explicit democracy promotion.

The latter point relates directly to the motivations, and the “why” of explicit sub-state democracy promotion. It is argued that sub-state governments – not necessarily nationalist – at these post-juncture periods, seek to engage in democracy promotion at least in part, as a means of constructing a particular notion of the sub-state on the world stage. It is a symbolic activity that projects a particular notion of the sub-state as an international actor to both international and domestic audiences. Doing so addresses domestic political objectives and motivations.

With regard to implicit democracy promotion, the *constitutional competence* and *institutional capacity* to engage in international development are key opportunity structures. The *IGR* again give particular meaning or clarify ambiguous constitutional settlements. However, it is through the adoption and emulation of the *global norms and practices* of international development that sub-states develop and engage in activities that promote democracy and good governance abroad. In being perceived as a non- or less political paradiplomatic activity, *IGR* have been more accommodating of governments that have sought to stretch an ambiguous constitutional settlement (as witnessed in the Welsh case).

The two cases of implicit democracy promotion explored in this project were both initiated during the early 2000s, a period where international development was particularly valorised. This was also a period where the global political context did not restrict international development activities. Again however, the activity was also initiated shortly after competence was devolved.

Like explicit democracy promotion activities, initiating international development activities is motivated at least in part by domestic political concerns. It is argued in this thesis that implicit democracy promotion through international development is a means of constructing and cultivating a particular notion of the sub-state as an international actor. It is also a symbolic activity that projects a particular notion of the sub-state internationally and domestically.

Though there are similarities between explicit and implicit democracy promotion, when sub-states are subcontracted by other actors, they must be understood differently. In such cases there is no agency at the sub-state level, beyond that of the individual officials that work on behalf of other actors. Rather, the unique knowledge and expertise of officials at the sub-state level offers other actors a means by which democracy promotion can be conducted in a manner which is more suitable to the context and challenges they face. The sub-state's knowledge and officials are opportunity structures for broader democracy promoters.

The understanding presented in this chapter already goes some way to addressing the third research question. Both paradiplomacy and the democracy promotion literature benefit from this better understanding of sub-state democracy promotion. There is now a comprehensive account of the hitherto ignored phenomenon of sub-state democracy promotion, and a detailed account of how, when and why sub-states promote democracy. Such an understanding acts as a reference point, and a source of discussion and further research in order to refine the understanding of both paradiplomacy and democracy promotion. The final chapter will discuss the implications of this better understanding of sub-state democracy promotion for the sub-state, and the democracy promotion literature.

Chapter 8: Implications

This chapter will address the third research question directly by detailing what studies of sub-states and of democracy promotion gain from a better understanding of sub-state democracy promotion. Essentially, this chapter will explore the implications of the research for the broader academic literature and policy community.

Firstly, sub-states' ability to bypass the political problems of central states is examined. Their role as sources of knowledge for national level organizations is then discussed, and the role that their knowledge and expertise plays within broader democracy promotion packages. A brief section details the emergence of sub-state democracy networks. The implications and challenges raised by the research for the theoretical IR literature more broadly is examined. A section will then explore the implications for paradiplomacy scholarship, before addressing the final research question directly by way of conclusion. Though not an explicit aim of the project, a brief section will also outline possible implications and practical considerations for practitioners. Throughout the chapter, possibilities for further research will be highlighted.

First and foremost, sub-states are democracy promoters. For the academic literature to omit them and their activities is to present an incomplete description and explanation of this international activity. By detailing the activities of sub-states, the project therefore makes an immediate contribution. Furthermore, the analysis offered in this chapter can from some early hypotheses which further research can test and build upon. These are noted before proceeding to detail the project's broader implications.

8.1.1 Hypotheses for future research

For sub-states to engage in explicit democracy promotion they not only require the capacity and competence to do so, but require freedom from central state constraints. It is also argued that such activities are open to sub-states only at particular periods when the international security context is calm. Motivations, meanwhile, are rooted in domestic political concerns, and a desire for the domestic political groups in government to present a particular image of itself globally, something that the activity of promoting democracy offers to do.

With regard to implicit democracy promotion, it may be hypothesized that once, more constitutional competence the capacity to engage in development programmes. However, due to the depoliticization of international development, the strict constitutional framework can be bypassed through IGR to allow the activity. So long as global development norms and practices are emulated by sub-states however, governance programmes will be pursued and democracy promoted. Once more, the activity is pursued for domestic political purposes, namely as a means of nation-building and defining the sub-state.

8.1.2 The advantages of sub-state democracy promotion

As implicit and explicit democracy promoters, sub-states have demonstrated the ability to distance and detach themselves from disadvantageous political-historical issues that impact their central governments. With regard to international development for example, Flanders was able to avoid association with Belgium's colonial legacy, shifting its focus away from Central Africa where their presence may have been as much of a hindrance to the development efforts in the region. By framing their development as distinctly Flemish, FICA were further able to distance themselves from a colonial legacy that could potentially cause difficulties within a development relationship.

But it is with regard to the subcontracting of democracy promotion to the sub-state level that the potential advantages of sub-states becomes clear for other actors. The UMD's use of Maryland officials to provide governance training to Chinese officials was a means to bypass a difficult political relationship between the USA and China. Maryland's status as a de-politicised source of knowledge – more practical and less ideological than national level democracy organizations – was a more palatable solution to both the federal government and the Chinese government.

The National Guard meanwhile offered the Federal government a more palatable tool for conducting the then new, less aggressively postured foreign policy relationships with the then newly independent Central and Eastern European states. The suitability of the Guard was such that they have become a tool to be used to establish security relationships with 76 states around the world (National Guard, 2016).

Such findings provide empirical support for the tentative assertions of paradiplomacy scholars that were outlined in Chapter 2. Kincaid's claims that sub-states can contribute where the central state may find an activity or relationship 'politically embarrassing, diplomatically awkward, or legally impossible for the nation-state government to do so' (Kincaid, 2010), are supported by the activities of Flanders and Maryland. Further claims that sub-states can 'open doors in unofficial ways that would be awkward or impossible for the US government to do officially' (Kincaid, 1999: 128), is another claim which is now supported by empirical data from this project.

Engaging with sub-state democracy promotion may therefore be of normative value for scholars of democracy looking to address the 'backlash' against the practice (explored in chapter 1), and to revitalise the practice. In the face of obstructive political contexts and scepticism of Western interests and motivations behind promoting democracy, sub-states emerge as potential proxies, or can on their own accord, circumvent the state-to-state difficulties. Further research could examine these possibilities, and their broader applicability.

8.1.3 Sub-states as sources of democratic knowledge and expertise

In subcontracting democracy promotion to sub-states, national level organizations are not only sidestepping potentially difficult political issues, they are also making use of a specific democratic governance knowledge. When democracy promotion scholars talk of the WFD's or the NDI's democracy promotion, the project has demonstrated that the knowledge being transferred includes the expertise, experience, and governance know-how sourced from sub-states. This democratic knowledge has not replaced the broader content or the model of democracy being promoted, but it has been demonstrated in this project that it is a hitherto ignored component.

This finding raises a further question; Why do democracy promotion actors subcontract sub-states and their practical knowledge of democratic governance, with a particular focus on access, accountability, transparency, and deliberation? While it has not been the central aim of this project to focus on questions relating to other actors, in returning to the established scholarship on democracy promotion, we can suggest that 'sub-state democracy' may be one further aspect of the industry's evolution.

Returning to the initial exploration of democracy promotion in chapter 1, Kurki has identified that alongside the liberal democratic ideals being promoted by the industry, 'extra-liberal' elements are also present within the broader "package" promoted (Kurki, 2013: 217-218). For Kurki these elements include projects that place an emphasis on social democratic concepts such as equality and participation. Sub-state democracy – its focus on accessibility, equality of access to governance structures, transparency, and accountability – fits this box without contradicting the market-liberal model. Sub-states can provide the 'extra-liberal' expertise.

8.1.4 Sub-states constructing democratic legitimacy

However, in exploring the role of sub-state democratic knowledge within the packages of national level organizations, and in understanding the nature of democracy promoted by sub-states, it could be tentatively argued, based on the understanding in chapter 7, that sub-states offer more than an 'extra-liberal' element to the industry, and also offer a legitimacy building component to their packages.

Lack of legitimacy of new democratic structures is central to the backlash theory introduced in chapter 1; the democracy being promoted is not 'deep' and lacks legitimacy (Diamond, 1999: 65). Concurrently, the declining legitimacy of democratic regimes is a broader theme, even in established democracies (see Dalton, 2004; Hay, 2007). The sub-state knowledge being subcontracted to supplement democracy promotion meanwhile, is drawn from experiences of legitimizing either new democratic governance structures, or those that do not benefit from a broader national legitimacy as in the US case. Emphasis is placed on facilitating engagement and participation in the governance structures. Even for instrumentalist theorists of democracy, the function of participation is at least;

...solely a protective one; the protection of the individual from arbitrary decisions by elected leaders and the protection of his private interests. It is in the achievement of this aim that the justification for the democratic method lies (Pateman, 1970: 14).

While others claim explicitly that citizens attribute legitimacy to political systems if they are given the means to participate in the political process (Smismans, 2004: 73-74), officials from sub-states, new or long established, themselves refer to the concepts that

they promote as the source of their own legitimacy. They appeal to the accessibility, accountability, transparency, and ease of access of their governance structures for citizens as sources of legitimacy.

In Wales, “Welsh democracy” was deliberately designed to emphasize the legitimacy of the new governance regime following a tight referendum. The new governance structures were presented as being more inclusive – thus more legitimate than the older structures which are criticized for their lack of inclusion. The concept of *overleg* and consultative policy formation underpins and legitimizes that broader Belgian system, consultation. As noted in chapter 4, the consultative nature of the Belgian system facilitates policy divergence at the sub-state level, but enough coherence at the federal level to function internationally (see Criekemans, 2010b). Similarly, the US model emphasizes the legitimacy of states, being closer and more accessible to its citizens, and the centralization of only specific aspects of governance at the federal level. In each of these cases, staff have practical experiences of attempting to institutionalize and realise the concepts that construct legitimacy and can perhaps even be considered the experts at constructing democratic legitimacy.

Sub-state knowledge certainly fits the ‘extra-liberal’ component of democracy promotion outlined by Kurki. But it may be more important to the efforts of the industry to adjust to the backlash against its practices, and the attacks against the legitimacy of newly democratized regimes. Sub-states, and consequently their officials, are to different extents, the experts at building and embedding legitimacy. Sub-state democracy in particular is utilized as a complementary component of democracy promotion which builds and deepens the legitimacy of the new democratic structures. This claim is a speculative theory however and could be supported and developed by further and more explicit research into the motivations of the national organizations for using sub-state democracy within their broader packages.

8.1.5 The sub-state democracy networks

A further finding from the empirical component of the project is the noting of a growing community of sub-state networks that share as well as promote their democratic knowledge. National (though internationally active) networks such as the NCSL and

continental networks such as the CALRE and REGLEG facilitate the sharing and exchange of good democratic governance practices between their members. Utah learns from Maryland, Wales from Flanders. Data suggested also that these networks are increasingly involved with each other in sharing and developing good democratic governance practices. The NCSL are establishing MoU with, and are learning from the CALRE for example.

There are two broad implications deriving from this finding. Firstly, further empirical research is required to map the networks and establish which are involved in the sharing of good democratic governance practice, how much, and how it is done. Secondly, more analytical work would be beneficial in an attempt to understand the nature of the exchange of knowledge. This may be of particular value to the democracy promotion literature, overwhelmingly focused on democratic transitions and developing states, given that the networks in question are involved in the exchange of knowledge between “developed” democracies. Why and what do developed democracies share with regard to democratic good practice?

8.1.6 International Relations Theory

The empirical findings of this project also hold implications and challenges for some aspects of IR theory that relates to democracy promotion, which will be presented in this section. These implications only build on the challenges identified in chapter 1 regarding the explanatory capacity of the existing perspectives once sub-state activities are recognized.

Firstly, the notion that a state holds or expresses an unified and coherent national interest is problematized by the existence of constituent parts of that state pursuing parallel, contrasting, or even conflicting interests through its own international activities. In this particular context, it immediately challenges realist assumptions regarding the motivations for democracy promotion. Realists must also accept that sub-states are at best exempt and at worst threaten the viability of some core assumptions regarding international relations. Most notably, sub-states do not inhabit an anarchical international world; their agency with regard to democracy promotion, as

paradiplomacy scholars have long argued more generally, is structured by laws, constitutions, and broader rules.

With regard to their interests, while there was a suggestion of economic interests playing at least a supporting role in motivating and justifying Flanders' CEEP, it is argued that hard or even soft power interests do not drive sub-state democracy promotion activities. It is argued that domestic concerns dominate the motivations of sub-state forays into international activities such as democracy promotion and international development; the construction of actorness or the projection of a particular conception of the sub-state onto the international stage for the benefit of the domestic constituency. Furthermore, if democracy promotion and international development activities are symbolic means for sub-states to construct actorness, it may act as a basis for further research to explore the extent to which it is also the case for states and other actors.

This is not to suggest that realist theory cannot absorb sub-states, only that it does not do so at the moment. Indeed, a realist perspective may be modified to accommodate and applied to sub-state democracy promotion, but that sub-state international interests at least in part concern the construction and understanding of the sub-state itself, particularly during a key, formative period in its existence. Incorporating this interest may contribute to the rethinking and revision of the notion with regard to states; that they also see promoting democracy in part as a symbolic activity (see Chandler, 2007; 2009)

Sub-states may also provide a fruitful area of study for liberal internationalists as they construct and maintain knowledge-sharing network, and cooperate with partners without seeking hard power advantages. Indeed, their enthusiasm to adopt and (more) consistently propagate the great liberal causes of promoting democracy and development may mark them out as potentially important actors. The National Guard emerged as an ideal organization within Clinton's liberal internationalist foreign policy for example, while the UMD and Maryland state officials were able to engage in the sharing of democratic good practice with China. Unburdened by hard power political imperatives, sub-states are free to focus on liberal internationalist priorities without so

many compromises. They are potentially more consistent liberal internationalist actors. Only further analysis of their activities will enrich such an understanding of their role.

For critical perspectives, the instinctive analysis will look to their role in pushing the market model onto their partners; are sub-states simply a more palatable means of spreading the same market-liberal democracy? There is certainly a market element to Flanders' explicit partnerships and the focus of some Maryland officials' work with the MCI and other organizations is overwhelmingly concerned with economic governance. However, this is more about "inserting" the sub-state into, and capitalizing on existing or emerging market elsewhere in the world than about the spread or establishment of those markets. Furthermore, this would be to focus on one aspect of a few activities that promote democracy, and attribute a single motivation across the board. Motivations, as discussed at length, are much more than economic for the sub-state governments. There is no significant analysis of the motivations of the hundreds, perhaps thousands of US state officials who volunteer for the various organizations sourcing their expertise, except that they are contracted because of their democratic governance expertise, not for their market-know how.

Crucially however, we cannot ignore the nature of the democracy being promoted – sub-state democracy. Sub-states promote and share techniques that, at least in theory, attempt to engender a more inclusive, deliberative, accessible, and transparent democracy. While these themes do not explicitly resist or jeopardise the transfer of market-liberal democracy, they do not necessarily support its transfer either. The focus is on deepening and expanding the legitimacy of the democratic governance structure within and amongst citizens. That governance structure need not necessarily be a liberal and market-centric one. One may even claim that the democracy promoted by sub-states aims to empower citizens and enable resistance to damaging or unpalatable aspects of the broader model being promoted.

The neo-Gramscian argument, already heavily contested (see chapter 1), claims that Western states seek to promote a very minimalist conception of democracy which de-radicalizes citizens and restricts any challenge to the economic system. The case studies relate to such arguments in an interesting manner, potentially supporting the broader

theory, but not necessarily providing any empirical corroboration. There were certainly no suggestions of an explicit coordinating force pushing a particular model of democracy. It might be argued however that sub-states provide an important legitimacy-building component to the broader democratic model being exported, which itself remains unchanged. Further research is required to explore such a notion, particularly in examining the motivations for democracy organizations have for sourcing the sub-state knowledge.

It could be argued in response however that the nature of the knowledge that sub-state officials and practitioners bring to broader democratization partnerships jeopardises the minimalist and de-radicalized model of democracy that neo-Gramscian scholars such as Robinson (1996) have argued is being promoted. Sub-state democracy is concerned with the capacity of citizens to access and take part in democratic governance. It may entrench and legitimize the broader governance structures, but it also provides the means to re-politicize, and for citizens to re-engage with democratic governance.

Guilhot's (2005) claims with regard to the role of NGOs in depoliticizing and embedding a particular model of democracy may nonetheless benefit from a closer investigation of sub-state international development. Sub-states have become new donors with varying amounts of financial and political leverage that could influence the medium and content of development projects. However, they have been enthusiastic in their efforts to emulate practices and norms of the industry without influencing the medium and content of the projects. They are, as argued, hollow actors, embedded in the global discourse of international development. The consequences of this decision – taken it is argued due to a lack of domestic expertise and a belief that the industry is the source of development expertise – is that the same discourses and practices of international development are practiced and propagated, entrenching the discourse further and in new spaces.

8.1.7 Theorising sub-state international activity

The project's empirical and analytical findings can also enrich and develop theories of sub-state international activity or paradiplomacy. Empirically, the three case studies in

this project offer the first extensive explorations of sub-state democracy promotion, a “fringe” activity that is nonetheless increasingly prevalent since the end of the Cold War. It is now known that sub-states promote democracy abroad, and there is also a understanding of their democracy promotion. Furthermore, and with regard to the study of paradiplomacy and its relevance to IR; it is a rare instance whereby a specific activity is the focus of analysis and not international activity in general. The “better” understanding has allowed the study to inform the broader literature on the activity, giving a tangible scholarly benefit to understanding sub-state paradiplomacy beyond efforts at understanding sub-states.

The modified Lecourian framework’s understanding of sub-state democracy promotion suggests that the key variables for a theory of paradiplomacy to consider are those opportunity structures that emerged as particularly pertinent in the various types. For explicit democracy promotion, the capacity and competence of the sub-state itself are key and are themselves factors mitigated by the IGR between it and the central state. Relations between sub-states and other partners is another key opportunity structure, itself influenced by the broader global security and political context. For implicit democracy promotion the constitutional allocation of competence for international development, again mitigated by IGR are key, as are global norms and their emulation and adoption, and the global context with regard to the practice. Subcontracted democracy promotion meanwhile illustrated how sub-state officials and knowledge plays a part in international relations, even if not through the agency of the sub-state.

Constitutional set-ups are often seen as key factors and a common consideration within the paradiplomacy scholarship (see chapter 2). Relatively common also are the semi-legal, “rules of the game” formed by the interpretation of the constitution through the IGR. The historical institutionalist emphasis on ‘rules’ has clarified the crucial role the latter plays in structuring and conditioning the former, and consequently what sub-states can and cannot do. Paradiplomacy literature has emphasized the importance of IGR in structuring those rules, but this project draws particular attention to the self-discipline and adherence to the rules by the sub-states themselves. The Welsh Government for example, is very aware of an unwritten dividing line with regard to international affairs that they take great care not to cross.

The Lecourian analysis has also highlighted the crucial role that political agency plays, particularly with regard to the construction of actorness at key stages. Furthermore, it has proved of benefit to distinguish between types of paradiplomatic activity, to understand why some activities are permitted and others not, by the same structural factors.

This project also demonstrates that Lecours' (2002: 96) claim that historical institutionalism is 'a great source of theoretical insight', is particularly valid. Lecours himself does not give much attention to the historical institutionalist concept of critical junctures, or institutional dynamism. However, they have enabled a richer understanding in this particular case, highlighting the key, post juncture period, and the diminishing interest in promoting democracy due to changing governments and political context within the institutions.

The importance of temporal factors have emerged as key aspects to consider. The historical institutionalist approach encourages a focus upon critical junctures in time. A key finding in this project has been the identification of the formative period, immediately after the establishment of a 'new' set of governance institutions such as a sub-state. These are critical junctures. When the 'rules' are ambiguous, there is an opportunity for political agency to influence and shape these rules, a period where forces can construct the actorness of the sub-state.

This latter point emphasizes the role of agency as sub-states develop their international activities. The data does not contradict theories that suggest that nationalist parties are the source of much of the political agency that seeks to exploit international opportunities. However the case studies do demonstrate that nationalists are by far not the only political forces in government that seek to do so, and that constructing actorness need not be a nationalist issue, particularly during the formative period of a sub-state's existence.

Furthermore, the concept of constructing actorness combined with the identification of a critical formative period shortly after devolution or decentralization of powers to the sub-state, is an important contribution. Understanding such phase as extraordinary, a period where rules are ambiguous but can be clarified by action, and actorness defined

through activity, helps understand why sub-states have looked to engage extensively in activities during such periods. In both cases where the sub-state became an implicit or explicit democracy promotion actor, activities were initiated during this formative phase. In both cases also, political interest in, and lead for such activities diminished or evaporated once the rules were established, and actorness defined – the activities had fulfilled their definitional role. The continuation of activities can be explained by the new paths that had been constructed, upon which succeeding governments were dependent.

Finally, the importance of the global political context, it is argued here, is a key variable that significantly influences when and where a sub-state may engage in the promotion of democracy. The collapse of a bipolar and highly politicized global context appears to have proved particularly conducive to sub-state engagement in political relationships involving the reform of governance structures. The willingness of partners to involve sub-states in internal reforms is also a key factor. Once more, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, a host of states turned to liberal democracy as the governance model to adopt. At the same time, the collapse of the apartheid and Pinochet regimes resulted in two further international causes for liberals and liberal democracy. LDCs in Africa meanwhile have willingly opened their borders to development practitioners and their governance reforms. These global political factors are key in facilitating the involvement of sub-states in democracy promotion and development.

Overall, the project is of further benefit in enriching and informing the attempts at theorising paradiplomacy. In exploring the Lecourian framework, we learn that particular activities are affected in different ways by the structural context. The typology used in this project, itself based upon the academic literature, was useful in its distinction between political paradiplomacy and economic or broader co-operational. Explicit political activities are not an option for the Welsh or Maryland executive, but economic and co-operational activities are acceptable, while all three are possible for the Flemish government.

This finding problematizes how paradiplomacy is theorised and generalized. Broad or sweeping generalizations regarding sub-states are increasingly difficult to sustain if the

opportunity structures for specific policy areas and activities are so variable. The insights of this project may not be as relevant with regard to a different activity; economic paradiplomacy for example does not seem as tied to temporal contexts. Or at least the global economic context and IGR are far more facilitating of sub-state involvement in economic paradiplomacy than the political context and IGR are with regard to promoting democracy.

Furthermore, even if a generalizable theory of sub-state international activity is possible to construct, how useful will such a theoretical understanding be if it does not relate to the scholarship on the activities themselves? The inductive approach adopted in this project has allowed for an understanding of sub-state democracy promotion. But it has been necessary to link that understanding to the broader understandings of democracy promotion in international relations for the research to be relevant. In remaining relevant to the democracy promotion scholarship, this project has sought to contribute to the understanding of international relations, not just to the understanding of sub-states. To ignore the contribution that studying sub-states can make to international relations, is to consign that study to an irrelevant fringe of the diplomacy literature.

In this regard, the flexible and modifiable Lecourian framework has shown itself to be a valuable tool with which to inductively build theory of sub-state activity that can also relate to the broader academic literature on the topic. The understanding constructed is far more relevant than the existing perspectives explored in chapters 1 and 2.

That is not to claim that the Lecourian framework is without its faults. The framework's construction is based on the implicit assumption that the sub-state is the actor; itself problematic to some theoretical perspectives. But it is a more problematic assumption with regard to subcontracted democracy promotion, where the sub-state was better understood as an opportunity structure for other actors.

8.2 What will the new understanding of sub-state democracy promotion contribute to the understanding of sub-states, and of democracy promotion?

The preceding sections of this chapter have related to the third research question, and this brief section will look to address the third research question directly by way of conclusion. It is argued here that studies of both sub-states, and of democracy promotion gain much from a better understanding of sub-state democracy promotion. The understanding presented in the previous chapter is itself a “better” understanding due to its theoretical and methodological approach, as argued in chapter 3 in answer to the second research question. That understanding is itself a valuable empirical and analytical contribution to the sub-state literature, detailing as it does, sub-state engagement in a specific and hitherto under-researched activity and the nuanced nature of sub-state engagement with that activity. It offers to the democracy promotion literature meanwhile, the first understanding and account of sub-state involvement, both as actor and subcontracted source. For both bodies of literature, the understanding offered in chapter 7 serves as a basis for discussion and further research. But as detailed in this chapter, there are further contributions.

Firstly, sub-states emerge as less objectionable actors, immediately presenting themselves as potential alternative actors, theoretically less susceptible to the ‘backlash’ faced by Western states. Moreover, when subcontracted, sub-state officials serve as proxies, also capable of bypassing difficult political contexts. In this sense, subcontracting sub-states to promote democracy may be of normative benefit for the ‘problem solving’ democracy promotion literature that seeks to address the backlash against democracy promotion.

Integral to sub-state democracy promotion, when not emulating broader norms and practices, is the democracy itself that is promoted. The focus of sub-state democracy promotion on inclusive and deliberative aspects of democratic governance, and practical experience of developing these concepts, is of value to existing promoters. Exposing the nature of sub-state democracy promotion consequently enriches the

understanding of the democracy being promoted by Western actors. Their role as constructors of democratic legitimacy for governance structures further enriches that understanding, while the growth of sub-state networks that share and promote democracy requires further research.

The “better” understanding also presents challenges to IR theory's explanatory potential with regard to democracy promotion. While potentially supporting liberal internationalist or critical perspectives, and challenging realist assumptions, the understanding, more than anything, calls for more work to develop the theoretical perspectives in order to incorporate their involvement in promoting democracy. The understanding presented here acts as a catalyst for such further research.

For the sub-state, and paradiplomacy literature in particular, there are several key findings deriving from this understanding. Firstly, that the global political context can be a key structuring force alongside the domestic structures in cases of political paradiplomacy. Secondly, with regard to the ‘rules’ of paradiplomacy constructed by the domestic structure, the sub-state’s self-disciplined adherence to those rules are important considerations.

Finally, by seeing democracy promotion and international development as a means of constructing actorness, the thesis suggests firstly, as some authors have hinted at (see Crikemans, 2006: 16; Lecours, 2002: 100), that the symbolic profile and borrowed legitimacy that activities offer sub-states are as integral to their motivation as engagement in the activity itself. Sub-states engage in activities for the profile it lends.

Secondly, the understanding points to key junctures in time, where actorness can be constructed and new rules formed; a facet exposed by the historical institutionalist perspective in particular. These periods, and the post-juncture process of defining and constructing actorness and new ‘rules of the game’, offer an explanation as to why a flurry of activities are initiated early in a sub-state’s existence.

The understanding presented here makes a further contribution to theorising paradiplomacy. In particular, the distinction made between types of paradiplomacy has proved useful. In distinguishing between economic or co-operational paradiplomacy,

and political paradiplomacy, a more nuanced understanding of sub-state paradiplomacy has been developed.

Finally, the Lecourian framework itself has emerged as a flexible and modifiable framework that constructs a narrative of a paradiplomatic activity that nonetheless remains relevant to both sub-state scholarship, and the academic debates surrounding the activity itself. It has allowed the understanding of democracy promotion to contribute to the evolving debates in IR.

In “better” understanding sub-state democracy promotion therefore, paradiplomacy and democracy promotion scholarship is provoked into improving their explanatory capacity. The understanding itself begins that process by serving as a source for discussion and further research.

8.2.1 Policy considerations

While acknowledging that it was not the core intention of this project to seek to contribute to the practitioner and policy communities, it would be appropriate to briefly note some considerations here.

For central governments, there is data to support the tentative theories of paradiplomacy scholars that sub-states could act as potential proxies in difficult political contexts. The MCI for example allowed US governance knowledge to be promoted amongst Chinese officials while Flanders’ officials claimed that its development work could avoid association with Belgium’s colonial legacy. Considering the difficulties and backlash facing the US or Western democracy promoters, sub-states may act as more palatable vehicles. The backlash the UK government experiences when it attempts to promote democracy, even rhetorically, through the commonwealth for example, may be avoided or sidestepped by its constituent devolved nations.

The forums encountered within and between the networks of sub-states also allow for the transfer and exchange of good democratic governance practice. The democratic good practice is depoliticized, technical, and removed from broader political context. Democracy organizations may benefit from further research into the activities of these networks and by exploring their potential as vehicles for promoting democracy and

sourcing sub-state knowledge in a similar manner to which the US organizations make use of the NCSL.

Sub-state knowledge and experience is sourced by national level democracy organizations and other networks. However, there was no suggestion of any attempts within the sub-states to institutionalize or develop their contribution. Networks such as the European Network of Political Foundations seek to coordinate and develop the democracy promotion work of political foundations for example, but nothing exists with regard to sub-states. The relationship is one-way, with the organizations dictating the content and the medium of delivery. Given time and resources, sub-states may offer valuable contributions in support of the first two suggestions above, and even in reforming the methods of exchanging and transmitting knowledge.

The MCI and CEEP have for example, been successful in developing mechanisms for exchanging governance knowledge, both based on a show-and-tell method making use of practitioners sourced from companies and organizations from within their respective societies. Both, the MCI explicitly so, are based on an older model of knowledge exchange, similar to the post-war Marshall plan. Nonetheless, the methods are contrary to development and democracy industry standards. Standards dictate that work is conducted in the partner country, the show-and-tell method is not possible under current good practice. Further research and evaluation of these mechanisms may reveal why the show-and-tell method is considered successful by its practitioners and funders, and whether it may be utilized to support broader democracy and development methods.

The more immediate concern however remains the invisibility of sub-states to the academic element of the democracy industry. This is particularly relevant to scholars looking for potential responses to the global backlash to democracy promotion. Sub-states offer knowledge, expertise, and experience of providing an added element to democratic governance. This element in theory at least, seeks to empower citizens, enhancing access, transparency, and understanding of democratic governance regimes, in turn building and deepening the legitimacy of those regimes. In developing theories and plans to counter the backlash against the efforts to promote democracy worldwide,

planners and scholars may benefit from turning to sub-states, their experiences, and their knowledge.

Conclusion

This project has sought to explore how we might better understand the practice of democracy promotion as conducted by sub-states. This core objective derived from two problems with the existing academic literature that might be expected to do so, problems that were uncovered in answering the first research question; **1) What are the problems associated with understanding sub-state democracy promotion?**

Chapters 1 and 2 sought to address this question by way of a review of the democracy promotion and paradiplomacy literatures respectively. Sub-states and their international activities were absent from the democracy promotion literature, and the broader IR perspectives. Sub-states are not present, and theoretical approaches fail to adequately account for the particulars of sub-states as international actors. Other actors are understood however, and the practice and associated themes are explained in varying ways, giving a particular context to which any “better” understanding of sub-state democracy promotion would need to relate.

The second chapter’s review of the paradiplomacy literature meanwhile revealed little account of sub-state democracy promotion activities, and a disconnect between studies of paradiplomacy and the broader IR discussions. The very little attention devoted to sub-state democracy promotion is not related to the broader scholarship on the topic. However, a framework for analysing the paradiplomacy of sub-states that takes account of both the structuring factors and particular agent-structure relationship emphasized by scholars was identified.

In short, the problems regarding understanding sub-state democracy promotion, and the answer to the first question, is that neither sub-states nor their democracy promoting activities are adequately understood and contextualized by either body of literature. However, the reviews of both literatures also provided a basis for addressing the second research question; **2) How might these problems be addressed, and the how, when, and why of sub-state democracy promotion better understood?**

Andre Lecours’ (2002) framework of opportunity structures maps the factors present at multiple levels, that have been claimed by paradiplomacy scholars to be key in conditioning the paradiplomacy of sub-states. In its historical institutionalist approach,

the framework also gives insight into the peculiar agent-structure dynamic that characterises sub-states' international activities.

The first chapter also identified the core themes of the democracy promotion literature that would anchor any empirical investigations undertaken through the analytical framework, keeping any resulting understanding relevant to the broader scholarship. The second chapter also highlighted key themes that are purported to influence and condition paradiplomacy generally. Combined, the thematic focus and Lecours' framework offered the most advanced means by which paradiplomacy can be investigated. The framework provided a means of accounting for the key conditioning factors and complex agent-structure dynamic purported to characterise paradiplomacy. Furthermore, the framework proved flexible and modifiable, allowing it to take account of and incorporate factors claimed to structure democracy promotion and international development. Any understanding resulting from the thematically-focused framework would produce a more contextualized, relevant, and therefore "better" understanding of sub-state democracy promotion.

Three empirical cases were then investigated in chapters 4-6 to test the framework, to produce a understanding, and address the final research question; **3) In what ways will this new understanding contribute to the knowledge of sub-states and democracy promotion?**

The cases (Flanders, Wales, and Maryland), were selected using a most different system design, in order to explore fully the extent and nature of sub-state democracy promotion. Selection was guided by the key domestic structures purported by Lecours to be key conditioning factors. Flanders, perhaps the most constitutionally "empowered" sub-state in the world, was a deliberate and explicit promoter of democracy through its government's Central and Eastern European Programme. The programme sought to support the transition of former Soviet counties to liberal democracies, and later, members of the EU. The government's bilateral partnership with Chile meanwhile was explored as another example of an explicit attempt to promote democracy, while the government's international development programmes in sub-Saharan Africa revealed a donor that was deliberately emulating and adopting the

global practices and norms as it established itself as a new “actor” in the field. This involved the emulation of “good governance” projects that promoted democracy more implicitly, within the broader development model. It was argued that the activities were initiated, at least in part, in order to ‘put Flanders on the map’, and to define its international character shortly after the key constitutional reforms of 1993.

Maryland, a functional international actor at most, its executive restricted from politicizing its international activity, did not emerge as a democracy promotion actor. Its executive did not engage in the activity in any way. Nonetheless, its officials and their knowledge and experiences were subcontracted by other, national level actors, in order to support their democracy packages and partnerships. The National Guard, the National Council of State Legislatures, the Maryland-China Initiative, and other democracy organizations more directly, used Maryland staff to supplement or provide a proxy source of specialist democratic governance knowledge. In the realm of democracy promotion, Maryland is better understood as an opportunity structure to other actors, than an actor capable of capitalizing on opportunities itself

Wales meanwhile offers an insight into “other” or “mid-way” possibilities; a constituent part of a unitary as opposed to a federal state holding very limited formal capacity and competence international affairs. While the government was found to be constrained from engaging in political paradiplomacy, it has however established an international development programme which, though implicitly, promotes democracy through “good governance” schemes adopted and emulated by Welsh practitioners. The legislature meanwhile has frequently engaged with international networks and partners to explicitly promote a distinctive, “Welsh” democracy. Doing so was a means of constructing a particular notion of the newly empowered Welsh Assembly, and the government’s development programme was similarly, at least in part, a means of projecting a particular notion of Wales’ international actorness. Furthermore, the legislature has become a source of expertise, sourced and subcontracted by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy and other democracy organizations in a manner similar to Maryland’s staff.

Alone, the findings of the three case study chapters offers a significant empirical and analytical contribution to the democracy promotion literature. But the chapter 7 constructed a understanding of sub-state democracy promotion based on the comparative conclusions of the case studies. It argued that sub-states promote democracy in three ways; implicitly, explicitly, and by being subcontracted. When promoting explicitly or implicitly through other activities – specifically, international development – they can be understood as actors, though their actorness is understood to be different from other actors, established in the scholarship.

Constitutional settlements, negotiated and clarified through IGR form key opportunity structures for sub-states to do so. Sub-state governments, and in one case its legislature, provide the agency that deliberately engages the sub-state's resources in the activity. Key constitutional junctures such as the devolution of power to a newly created sub-state are critical periods, where the agency of governments and legislatures can mobilise the sub-state's resources to engage in democracy promotion, at least in part, as a means of defining the international actorness. That agency does not necessarily come from nationalist governments; non-nationalists have been the most enthusiastic initiators of sub-state democracy promotion.

In being subcontracted however, sub-states are not actors, but are key to understanding the contracting actor's democracy promotion. Sub-states are best understood as a source of knowledge and expertise, and a means by which national level organizations can bypass and avoid the difficult constraints created by state-level relations. Sub-states are proxies and opportunity structures for other actors.

In all cases, the global political-security context at particular times, was also a key conditioning factor, often facilitating opportunities for all kinds of sub-state involvement in promoting democracy. Sub-states are also capable of promoting a particular, more inclusive and deliberative form of democracy. They bring to their democracy promotion, knowledge that is grounded in experiences of operationalizing and institutionalizing inclusive and deliberative democratic concepts.

This understanding is itself a valuable analytical contribution, on top of the empirical contribution of the case studies, that informs, and serves as a basis for further

discussion and research on the topic. But the understanding has broader implications for the democracy promotion and paradiplomacy literatures explored in chapters 1 and 2. These implications are explored in chapter 8, effectively addressing the third research question directly.

Firstly, the potential for sub-states to bypass political difficulties faced by states, or act as proxies for national governments and organizations is noted. Their democracy promotion can also be seen to complement current theories, as providing an 'extra-liberal' component to packages (see Kurki, 2013). However, their subcontracted knowledge can also be seen to be a particular knowledge focussed on constructing legitimacy for the broader state.

The explanatory potential of the IR theoretical perspectives employed to understand democracy promotion are also challenged by both the empirical and analytical components of the project. Meanwhile, the paradiplomacy scholarship is also addressed, suggesting that the global political context, and key historical junctures are also key structuring factors for sub-state engagement in particular activities such as promoting democracy. Further emphasis is placed upon the concept of constructing actorness at key, formative periods as a means of enriching the understanding of sub-state international activities. Ultimately however, it is argued that both literatures benefit from the understanding of sub-state democracy promotion, both empirically and analytically. Indeed, in seeking to address the backlash against, and difficulties facing democracy in the world, scholars may benefit from exploring sub-states, their relevance, and potential contribution. Sub-state scholars meanwhile may find that their insight has much broader relevance than hitherto acknowledged.

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xxxi	Interview 1.10, 04/03/2014, Westminster Foundation for Democracy
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xxxiii	Interview 1.10, 04/03/2014, Westminster Foundation for Democracy
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xxxvii	Interview 1.10, 04/03/2014, Westminster Foundation for Democracy
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